
WORDS OF JESUS
&
MIND OF JESUS
FAITHFUL PROMISER

To his dear Friend &
Co. Laborer in the Lord
Miss Sophie Brinckerhoff

From her Pastor

March 8th 1872.

THE MIND AND WORDS OF JESUS; AND THE FAITHFUL PROMISER.

BY THE

REV. J. R. MACDUFF, D. D.,

AUTHOR OF "THE MORNING AND NIGHT WATCHES," "BOW IN THE CLOUD," "FOOTSTEPS OF ST. PAUL," ETC.

NEW YORK:

ROBERT CARTER & BROTHERS

No. 530 BROADWAY.

1871.

The Mind of Jesus.

THE MIND OF JESUS! What a study is this! To attain a dim reflection of it, is the ambition of angels—higher they cannot soar. "To be conformed to the image of His Son!"—it is the end of God in the predestination of His Church from all eternity. "We shall be *like* Him!"—it is the Bible picture of *heaven!*

But how lofty such a standard? How all creature perfection shrinks abashed and confounded before a Divine portraiture like this! He is the true "Angel standing in the sun," who alone projects no shadow; so bathed in the glories of Deity that likeness to Him becomes like the light in which He is shrouded,—"no man can approach unto it." May we not, however, seek at least to approximate, though we cannot adequately resemble? It is impossible on earth to associate with a fellow-being without getting in some degree assimilated to him. So, the more we study "the Mind of Christ," the more we are in His company—holding converse with Him as our best and dearest friend—catching up His holy looks and holy deeds—the more shall we be "transformed into the same image."

"Consider," says the Great Apostle, (literally '*gaze* on') "Christ Jesus" (Heb. iii. 1). Study feature by feature, lineament by lineament, of that Peerless Examplar. "*Gaze*" on the Son of Righteousness, till, like gazing long on the natural

sun, you carry away with you on your spiritual vision, dazzling images of His brightness and glory. Though He be the Archetype of all goodness, remember He is no shadowy model,—though the Infinite Jehovah, He was "the *Man* Christ Jesus."

We must never, indeed, forget that it is not the *mind*, but the *work* of Immanuel which lies at the foundation of a sinner's hope. He must be known as a *Saviour*, before He is studied as an *Example*. His doing and dying is the centre jewel, of which all the virtues of His holy life are merely the setting. But neither must we overlook the Scripture obligation to walk in His footsteps and imbibe His Spirit, for "if any man have not the *Spirit of Christ*, he is *none of His!*"

Oh, that each individual Christian were more Saviour-like; that, in the manifestation of a holy character and heavenly demeanor, it might be said in some feeble measure of the faint and imperfect reflection—"Such was *Jesus!*"

How far short we are of such a criterion, mournful experience can testify. But it is at least comforting to know that there is a day coming, when, in the full vision and fruition of the Glorious Original, the exhortation of our motto-verse will be needed no more; when we shall be able to say, in the words of an inspired apostle,

"We *have* the MIND OF CHRIST!"

1st Morning of Month.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"I have compassion on the multitude."—Mark viii. 2.

Compassion. What a pattern to His people, the tender *compassion* of Jesus! He found the world He came to save a moral Bethesda. The wail of suffering humanity was everywhere borne to His ear. It was His delight to walk its porches, to pity, relieve, comfort, save! The faintest cry of misery arrested His footsteps—stirred a ripple in this fountain of Infinite Love. Was it a *leper*,—that dreaded name which entailed a life-long exile from friendly looks and kindly words? There was *One*, at least, who had tones and deeds of tenderness for the outcast. "*Jesus*, being moved with compassion, put forth His hand and *touched* him." Was it some blind beggars on the Jericho highway, grop-

ing in darkness, pleading for help? *Jesus* stood still, and had compassion on them, and touched their eyes!" Was it the speechless pleadings of a widow's tears at the gate of Nain, when she followed her earthly pride and prop to the grave? "When the *Lord* saw her, He had compassion on her, and said, Weep not!" Even when He rebukes, the bow of compassion is seen in the cloud, or rather, that cloud, as it passes, dissolves in a rain-shower of mercy. He pronounces Jerusalem "*desolate*," but the doom is uttered amid a flood of anguished sorrow!

Reader! do the compassionate words and deeds of a tender Saviour find any feeble echo and transcript in yours? As you traverse in thought the wastes of human wretchedness, does the spectacle give rise, not to the mere emotional feeling which weeps itself away in sentimental tears, but to an earnest desire to *do something* to mitigate the suf-

ferings of woe-worn humanity? How vast and world-wide the claims on your compassion!—now near, now at a distance—the unmet and unanswered cry of perishing millions abroad — the heathendom which lies unsuccoured at your own door—the public charity languishing—the mission staff dwarfed and crippled from lack of needful funds—a suffering district—a starving family—a poor neighbour—a helpless orphan—it may be, some crowded hovel, where misery and vice run riot—or some lonely sick-chamber, where the dim lamp has been wasting for dreary nights—or some desolate home which death has entered, where "Joseph is not, and Simeon is not," and where some sobbing heart, under the tattered garb of poverty, mourns, unsolaced and unpitied, its "loved and lost." Are there none such within your reach, to whom a trifling pittance would be as an angel of mercy? How it would hallow and en-

hance all you possess, were you to seek to live as almoner of Jehovah's bounties! If He has given you of this world's substance, remember it is bestowed, not to be greedily hoarded or lavishly squandered. Property and wealth are talents to be traded on and laid out for the good of others—sacred trusts, not selfishly to be *enjoyed*, but generously to be *employed*.

"The poor are the representatives of Jesus, their wants He considers as His own," and He will recompense accordingly. The feeblest expression of Christian pity and love, though it be but the widow's mite, or the cup of cold water, or the kindly look and word when there is neither mite nor cup to give, yet, if done in *His* name, it is entered in the "book of life" as a "loan to the Lord;" and in that day when "the books are opened," the loan will be paid back with usury.

2D MORNING.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"Not my will, but Thine be done!"—LUKE XXII. 42.

Resignation in Trial.

WHERE was there ever resignation like this? The life of Jesus was one long martyrdom. From Bethlehem's manger to Calvary's cross, there was scarce one break in the clouds; these gathered more darkly and ominously around Him till they burst over His devoted head as He uttered His expiring cry. Yet throughout this pilgrimage of sorrow no murmuring accent escaped His lips. The most suffering of all suffering lives was one of uncomplaining submission.

"Not *my* will, but *Thy* will," was the motto of this wondrous Being! When He came into the world He thus announced His advent, "Lo, I come, I delight to do *Thy will*, O my God!" When He left it, we listen to the same

prayer of blended agony and acquiescence, "O my Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me! *Nevertheless* not as *I will*, but as *Thou wilt*."

Reader! is this mind also in *you?* Ah, what are your trials compared to His! What the ripples in your tide of woe, compared to the waves and billows which swept over Him! If He, the spotless Lamb of God, "murmured not," how can *you* murmur? *His* were the sufferings of a bosom never once darkened with the passing shadow of guilt or sin. *Your* severest sufferings are deserved, yea, infinitely less *than* deserved! Are you tempted to indulge in hard suspicions, as to God's faithfulness and love, in appointing some peculiar trial? Ask yourself, Would Jesus have done *this?* Should *I* seek to pry into "the deep things of God," when *He*, in the spirit of a weaned child, was satisfied with the solution, "*Even so, Father, for so it seems good in Thy sight*"?

"Even so, *Father!*" Afflicted one! "tossed with tempest, and not comforted," take that *word* on which thy Lord pillowed His suffering head, and make it, as He did, the secret of thy resignation.

The sick child will take the bitterest draught from a *father's* hand. "This cup which Thou, O God, givest me to drink, shall I not drink it?" Be it mine to lie passive in the arms of Thy chastening love, exulting in the assurance that all Thy appointments, though sovereign, are never arbitrary, but that there is a gracious "need be" in them all. "My Father!" my Covenant God! the God who *spared not Jesus!* It may well hush every repining word.

Drinking deep of His sweet spirit of submission, you will be able thus to meet, yea, even to welcome, your sorest cross, saying, "Yes, Lord, all *is* well, just because it is Thy blessed will. Take me, use me, chasten me, as seemeth

good in Thy sight. My will is resolved into Thine. This trial is dark; I cannot see the 'why and the wherefore' of it—but 'not my will, but Thy will!' The gourd is withered; I cannot see the reason of so speedy a dissolution of the loved earthly shelter; sense and sight ask in vain why these leaves of earthly refreshment have been doomed so soon to droop in sadness and sorrow. But it is enough. "The Lord prepared the worm;" "not *my* will, but *Thy* will!"

Oh, how does the stricken soul honour God by thus being *dumb* in the midst of dark and perplexing dealings, recognising in these, part of the needed discipline and training for a sorrowless, sinless, deathless world; regarding every trial as a link in the chain which draws it to heaven, where the whitest robes will be found to be those here baptized with suffering, and bathed in tears!

"ARM YOURSELVES LIKEWISE WITH THE SAME MIND."

MORNING

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" —LUKE II. 49.

Devotedness to God.

"MY meat and my drink are to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work." That *one* object brought Jesus from heaven—that *one* object He pursued with unflinching, undeviating constancy, until He could say, "It is finished."

However short man comes of *his* chief end, "Glory to God in the highest" was the motive, the rule, and exponent of every act of that wondrous life. With us, the magnet of the soul, even when truest, is ever subject to partial oscillations and depressions, trembling at times away from its great attraction-point. *His* never knew one tremulous wavering form its all-glorious centre. With him there were no ebbs and

flows, no fits and starts. He could say, in the words of that prophetic psalm which speaks so pre-eminently of Himself, "I have set the Lord *always* before me!"

Reader! do you feel that in some feeble measure this lofty life-motto of the sinless Son of God is written on your home and heart, regulating your actions, chastening your joys, quickening your hopes, giving energy and direction to your whole being, subordinating all the affections of your nature to their high destiny? With pure and unalloyed motives, with a single eye, and a single aim, can you say, somewhat in the spirit of His brightest follower, "This *one* thing I do?" Are you ready to regard all you have—rank, name, talents, riches, influence, distinctions—valuable, only so far as they contribute to promote the glory of Him who is "first and last, and all in all?" Seek to feel that your heavenly Father's

is not only *a* business, but *the* business of life. "Whose I am, and whom I serve,"—let this be the superscription written on your thoughts and deeds, your employments and enjoyments, your sleeping and waking. Be not, as the fixed stars, cold and distant; but be ever bathing in the sunshine of conscious nearness to Him who is the sun and centre of all happiness and joy.

Each has some appointed work to perform, some little niche in the spiritual temple to occupy. Yours may be no splendid services, no flaming or brilliant actions to blaze and dazzle in the eye of man. It may be the quiet unobtrusive inner work, the secret prayer, the mortified sin, the forgiven injury, the trifling act of self-sacrifice for God's glory and the good of others, of which no eye but the Eye which seeth in secret is cognizant. It matters not how *small*. Remember, with Him, motive dignifies action. It is not *what* we do, but *how*

we do it. He can be glorified in *little* things as well as *great* things, and by nothing more than the daily walk, the daily life.

Beware of anything that would interfere with a surrender of heart and soul to His service,—wordly entanglements, indulged sin, an uneven walk, a divided heart, nestling in creature comforts, shrinking from the cross. How many hazard, if they do not make shipwreck, of their eternal hopes, by becoming *idlers* in the vineyard; lingerers, like Lot; world-lovers, like Demas; "do-nothing Christians," like the inhabitants of Meroz! The command is, "Go work!" *Words* tell what you *should* be; *deeds* tell what you *are*. Let those around you see there is a reality in walking *with* God, and working *for* God!

4TH MORNING.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

'Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."—LUKE xxiii. 34.

Forgiveness of Injuries.

MANY a death-struggle has been made to save a friend. A dying Saviour gathers up His expiring breath to plead for His foes! At the climax of His own woe, and of human ingratitude—man-forsaken, and God-deserted—His faltering voice mingles with the shout of His murderers,—"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do!" Had the faithless Peter been there, could he have wondered at the reply to a former question,—"Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him,—till seven times?" Jesus said unto him, "I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven" (Matt. xviii. 21).

Superiority to insult and ignominy,

with some, proceeds from a callous and indifferent temperament,—a cold, phlegmatic, stoical insensibility, alike to kindness or unkindness. It was not so with Jesus. The tender sensibilities of His holy nature rendered Him keenly sensitive to ingratitude and injury, whether this was manifested in the malice of undisguised enmity, or the treachery of trusted friendship. Perhaps to a noble nature the latter of these is the more deeply wounding. Many are inclined to forgive an open and unmasked antagonist, who are not so willing to forget or forgive heartless faithlessness, or unrequited love. But see, too, in this respect, the conduct of the blessed Redeemer! Mark how He deals with His own disciples who had basely forsaken Him and fled, and that, too, in the hour He most needed their sympathy! No sooner does He rise from the dead than He hastens to disarm their fears and to assure them of an unaltered and un-

alterable affection. "Go tell *my brethren*," is the first message He sends; "*Peace be unto you*," is the salutation at the first meeting; "*Children!*" is the word with which He first greets them on the shores of Tiberias. Even Joseph, (the Old Testament type and pattern of generous forgiveness,) when he makes himself known to his brethren, recalls the bitter thought, "Whom ye sold into Egypt." The true Joseph, when *He* reveals Himself to His disciples, buries in oblivion the memory of bygone faithlessness. He *meets* them with a benediction. He *leaves* them at His ascension with the same—"He lifted up His hands and blessed them!"

Reader! follow in all this the spirit of your Lord and Master. In rising from the study of His holy example, seek to feel that with you there should be no such name, no such word, as *enemy!* Harbour no resentful thought, indulge in no bitter recrimination. Surrender

yourself to no sullen fretfulness. Let "the law of kindness" be in your heart. Put the best construction on the failings of others. Make no injurious comments on their frailties; no uncharitable insinuations. "Consider thyself, lest thou also be tempted." When disposed at any time to cherish an unforgiving spirit towards a brother, think, if thy God had retained His anger for ever, where wouldst thou have been? If *He*, the Infinite One, who might have spurned thee for ever from His presence, hath had patience with thee, and forgiven thee *all*, wilt *thou*, on account of some petty grievance which thy calmer moments would pronounce unworthy of a thought, indulge in the look of cold estrangement, the unrelenting word, or unforgiving deed? "If any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye."

"ARM YOURSELVES LIKEWISE WITH THE SAME MIND."

5TH MORNING

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"I am meek and lowly in heart."—MATT. XI. 29.

Meekness. THERE is often a beautiful blending of majesty and humility, magnanimity and lowliness, in great minds. The mightiest and holiest of all Beings that ever trod our world was the meekest of all. The Ancient of Days was as the "infant of days." He who had listened to nothing but angel-melodies from all eternity, found, while on earth, melody in the lispings of an infant's voice, or in an outcast's tears! No wonder an innocent *lamb* was His emblem, or that the anointing Spirit came down upon Him in the form of the gentle *dove*. He had the wealth of worlds at His feet. The hosts of heaven had only to be summoned as His retinue. But all the pageantry of the world, all

its dreams of carnal glory, had for Him no fascination. The Tempter, from a mountain-summit, shewed Him a wide scene of "splendid misery;" but He spurned alike the thought and the adversary away! John and James would call down fire from heaven on a Samaritan village; He rebukes the vengeful suggestion! Peter, on the night of the betrayal, cuts off the ear of an assassin; the intended Victim, again, only challenges His disciple, and heals His enemy!

Arraigned before Pilate's judgment-seat, how meekly He bears nameless wrongs and indignities! Suspended on the cross—the execrations of the multitude are rising around, but He hears as though He heard them not; they extract no angry look, no bitter word—"Behold the *Lamb* of God!" Need we wonder that "meekness" and "poverty of spirit" should stand foremost in His own cluster of beatitudes; that He

should select *this* among all His other qualities for the peculiar study and imitation of His disciples, "Learn of Me, *for* I am *meek;*" or that an apostle should exhort "by the *meekness* and *gentleness* of Christ"?

How different the world's maxims, and His! The *world's*—"Resent the affront, vindicate honour!" *His*—"Overcome evil with good!' The *world's*—"Only let it be when for your *faults* ye are buffeted that ye take it patiently." *His*—"When ye do *well* and suffer for it, ye take it patiently; *this* is acceptable with God" (1 Pet. ii. 20).

Reader! strive to obtain, like your adorable Lord, this "ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which, in the sight of God, is of great price." Be "clothed" with gentleness and humility. Follow not the world's fleeting shadows that mock you as you grasp them. If always aspiring—ever soaring on the wing—you are likely to become discon-

tented, proud, selfish, time-serving. In whatever position of life God has placed you, be satisfied. What! ambitious to be on a pinnacle of the temple—a higher place in the Church, or in the world?—Satan might hurl you down! "Be not high-minded, but fear." And with respect to others, honour their gifts, contemplate their excellencies only to imitate them. Speak kindly, act gently, "condescend to men of low estate."

Be assured, no happiness is equal to that enjoyed by the "*meek Christian.*" He has within him a perpetual inner sunshine, a perennial well-spring of peace. Never ruffled and fretted by real or imagined injuries, he puts the best construction on motives and actions, and by a gentle answer to unmerited reproach often disarms wrath.

6th Morning.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth."—Matt. xi. 25.

Thankfulness. A THANKFUL spirit pervaded the entire life of Jesus, and surrounded with a heavenly halo His otherwise darkened path. In moments we least expect to find it, this beauteous ray breaks through the gloom. In instituting the memorial of His *death*, He "*gave thanks!*" Even in crossing the Kedron to Gethsemane, "He sang an hymn!"

We know in seasons of deep sorrow and trial that everything wears a gloomy aspect. Dumb Nature herself to the burdened spirit seems as if she partook in the hues of sadness. The life of Jesus was one continuous experience of privation and woe—a "Valley of Baca," from first to last; yet, amid accents of plaintive sorrow, there are ever heard

subdued undertones of *thankfulness* and joy!

Ah, if He, the suffering "Man of Sorrows," could, during a life of unparalleled woe, lift up His heart in grateful acknowledgment to His Father in heaven, how ought the lives of those to be one perpetual "hymn of thankfulness," who are from day to day and hour to hour (for all they have, both temporally and spiritually) pensioners on God's bounty and love!

Reader! cultivate this thankful spirit; it will be to thee a perpetual feast. There is, or ought to be, with us no such thing as *small* mercies; all are *great*, because the least are undeserved. Indeed, a really thankful heart will extract motive for gratitude from everything, making the most even of scanty blessings. St. Paul, when in his dungeon at Rome, a prisoner in chains, is heard to say, "I have *all*, and abound!"

Guard, on the other hand, against that spirit of continual fretting and moping over fancied ills; that temptation to exaggerate the real or supposed disadvantages of our condition, magnifying the trifling inconveniences of every-day life into enormous evils. Think rather how much we have to be thankful for. The world in which we live, in spite of all the scars of sin and suffering upon it, is a happy world. It is not, as many would morbidly paint it, flooded with tears and strewn with wrecks, plaintive with a perpetual dirge of sorrow. True, the "Everlasting Hills" are in glory, but there are numberless eminences of grace, and love, and mercy below; many green spots in the lower valley, *many more than we deserve!*

God will reward a thankful spirit. Just as on earth, when a man receives with gratitude what is given, we are more disposed to give again, so also,

"the *Lord* loveth" a cheerful "receiver," as well as a cheerful "giver."

Let ours, moreover, be a *Gospel* thankfulness. Let the incense of a grateful spirit rise not only to the Great Giver of all good, but to our Covenant God in Christ. Let it be the spirit of the child exulting in the bounty and beneficence of his *Father's* house and home! "Giving *thanks* always for all things unto God and *the Father*, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ!"

While the sweet melody of gratitude vibrates through every successive moment of our daily being, let love to our adorable Redeemer show for *whom* and for *what* it is we reserve our notes of loftiest and most fervent praise. Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift!

7TH MORNING.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"For even Christ pleased not Himself."—ROM. xv. 3.

Unselfishness. Too legibly are the characters written on the fallen heart and a fallen world—"All seek their own!" Selfishness is the great law of our degenerated nature. When the love of God was dethroned from the soul, self vaulted into the vacant seat, and there, in some one of its Proteus shapes, continues to reign.

Jesus stands out for our imitation a grand solitary exception in the midst of a world of selfishness. His entire life was one abnegation of self; a beautiful living embodiment of that charity which "seeketh not her own." He who for others turned water into wine, and provided a miraculous supply for the fainting thousands in the wilderness, exerted no such miraculous power for

His own necessities. During His forty days' temptation, no table did He spread for Himself, no booth did he rear for His unpillowed head. Twice do we read of Him shedding tears—on neither occasion were they for Himself. The approach of His cross and passion, instead of absorbing Him in His own approaching sufferings, seemed only to elicit new and more gracious promises to His people. When His enemies came to apprehend Him, His only stipulation was for His disciples' release—"Let these go their way." In the very act of departure, with all the boundless glories of eternity in sight, *they* were still all His care.

Ah, how different is the spirit of the world! With how many is day after day only a new oblation to that idol which never darkened with its shadow His holy heart; pampering their own wishes; "envying and grieving at the good of a neighbour;" unable to brook

the praise of a rival; establishing their own reputation on the ruins of another; thus engendering jealousy, discontent, peevishness, and every kindred unholy passion.

"But ye have not so learned Christ!" Reader! have you been sitting at the feet of Him who "pleased not Himself?" Are you "dying daily;"—dying to self as well as to sin? Are you animated with *this* as the high end and aim of existence,—to lay out your time, and talents, and opportunities, for God's glory, and the good of your fellow-men; not seeking your own interests, but rather ceding these, if, by doing so, another will be made happier, and your Saviour honoured? You may not have it in your power to manifest this "mind of Jesus" on a great scale, by enduring great sacrifices; nor is this required. His denial of self had about it no repulsive austerity; but you can evince its holy influence and sway, by innumer-

able little offices of kindness and good-will; taking a generous interest in the welfare and pursuits of others, or engaging and co-operating in schemes for the mitigation of human misery.

Avoid *ostentation*,—another repulsive form of self. Be willing to be in the shade; sound no trumpet before you. The evangelist Matthew made a great feast, which was graced by the presence of Jesus; in his Gospel he says not one word about it!

Seek to live more constantly and habitually under the constraining influence of the love of Jesus. Selfishness withers and dies beneath Calvary.

Ah, believer! if Christ had "pleased Himself," where wouldst *thou* have *been* this day?

"ARM YOURSELVES LIKEWISE WITH THE SAME MIND."

8TH MORNING

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

"Jesus said unto him, It is written."—MATT. IV. 7.

Submission to God's Word.

WE cannot fail to be struck, in the course of the Saviour's public teaching, with his constant appeal to the Word of God. While, at times, He utters, in His own name, the authoritative behest, "Verily, verily, *I* say unto you," He as often thus introduces some mighty work, or gives intimation of some impending event in His own momentous life. "These things must come to pass, that *the Scriptures be fulfilled, which saith.*" He commands His people to "search the Scriptures;" but he sets the example by searching and submitting to them Himself. Whether He drives the money-changers from their sacrilegious traffic in the temple, or foils his great adversary on the mount

of temptation, he does so with the same weapon, "*It is written.*" When He rises from the grave, the theme of His first discourse is one impressive tribute to the value and authority of the same sacred oracles. The disciples on the road to Emmaus listen to nothing but *a Bible lesson.* "He expounded unto them in all *the Scriptures* the things concerning Himself."

How momentous the instruction herein conveyed! The necessity of the absolute subjection of the mind to God's written Word—making churches, creeds, ministers, books, religious opinion, all subordinate and subservient to this—"How readest thou?" rebuking the philosophy, falsely so called, that would distort the plain statements of Revelation, and bring them to the bar of proud Reason.

If an infallible Redeemer, "a law to Himself," was submissive in all respects to the "*written* law," shall fallible man

refuse to sit with the teachableness of a little child, and listen to the Divine message? There may be, there *is*, in the Bible, what Reason staggers at: "we have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep." But "*Thus saith the Lord*," is enough. Faith does not first ask what the bread is made of, but *eats* it. It does not analyse the components of the living stream, but with joy draws the water from the "wells of salvation."

Reader! take that Word as "the lamp to thy feet, and the light to thy path." In days when false lights are hung out, there is the more need of keeping the eye steadily fixed on the unerring beacon. Make the Bible the arbiter in all difficulties—the ultimate court of appeal. Like Mary, "sit at the feet of Jesus," willing only to learn of Him. How many perplexities it would save you! how many fatal steps in life it would prevent—how many tears! "It is a great matter," says the noblest

of modern Christian philosophers, "when the mind dwells on any passage of Scripture, just to think *how true it is.*" *(Chalmer's Life.)*

In every dubious question, when the foot is trembling on debatable ground, knowing not whether to advance or recede, make this the final criterion, "What saith the Scripture?" The world may remonstrate--erring friends may disapprove—Satan may tempt—ingenious arguments may explain away; but, with our finger on the revealed page, let the words of our Great Example be ever a divine formula for our guidance: "*This* commandment have I received of my Father!"

"ARM YOURSELVES LIKEWISE WITH THE SAME MIND."

9TH MORNING.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

"He continued all night in prayer to God."—LUKE vi. 12.

Prayerfulness. WE speak of *this* Christian and *that* Christian as a "man of prayer." Jesus was emphatically so. The Spirit was "poured upon Him without measure," yet—*He prayed!* He was incarnate wisdom, "needing not that any should teach Him." He was infinite in His power, and boundless in His resources, yet—*He prayed!* How deeply sacred the prayerful memories that hover around the solitudes of Olivet and the shores of Tiberias! He seemed often to turn night into day to redeem moments for prayer, rather than lose the blessed privilege.

We are rarely, indeed, admitted into the solemnities of His inner life. The veil of night is generally between us and the Great High Priest, when He entered

"the holiest of all;" but we have enough to reveal the depth and fervour, the tenderness and confidingness of this blissful intercommunion with His heavenly Father. No morning dawns without His fetching fresh manna from the mercy-seat. "He wakeneth morning by morning; he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned." (Isa. l. 4.) Beautiful description!—a praying Redeemer, wakening, as if at early dawn, the ear of His Father, to get fresh supplies for the duties and the trials of the day! All His public acts were consecrated by prayer,—His baptism, His transfiguration, His miracles, His agony, His death. He breathed away His spirit in prayer. "His last breath," says Philip Henry, "was praying breath."

How sweet to think, in holding communion with God—*Jesus* drank of this very brook! He consecrated the bended knee and the silent chamber. He refreshed His fainting spirit at the same

great Fountain-head from which it is life for us to draw, and death to forsake.

Reader! do you complain of your languid spirit, your drooping faith, your fitful affections, your lukewarm love? May you not trace much of what you deplore to an unfrequented chamber? The treasures are locked up from you, because you have suffered the key to rust; the hands hang down, because they have ceased to be uplifted in prayer. Without prayer!—It is the pilgrim without a staff—the seaman without a compass—the soldier going unarmed and unharnessed to battle.

Beware of encouraging what indisposes to prayer—going to the audience chamber with soiled garments, the din of the world following you, its distracting thoughts hovering unforbidden over your spirit. Can you wonder that the living water refuses to flow through obstructed channels, or the heavenly light to pierce murky vapours?

On earth, fellowship with a lofty order of minds, imparts a certain nobility to the character; so, in a far higher sense, by communion with God you will be transformed into His image, and get assimilated to His likeness. Make every event in life a reason for fresh going to Him. If difficulted in duty, bring it to the test of prayer. If bowed down with anticipated trial,—"fearing to enter the cloud,"—remember Christ's preparation, "Sit ye here while I go and *pray* yonder."

Let prayer consecrate everything—your time, talents, pursuits, engagements, joys, sorrows, crosses, losses. By it, rough paths will be made smooth, trials disarmed of their bitterness, enjoyments hallowed and refined, the bread of the world turned into angels' food. "It is in the closet," says Payson, "the battle is lost or won!"

10TH MORNING.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us."—EPH. v. 2.

Love to the Brethren.

"JESUS," says a writer, "came from heaven on the wings of love." It was the element in which He moved and walked. He sought to baptize the world afresh with it. When we find Him teaching us by love to vanquish an *enemy*, we need not wonder at the tenderness of His appeals to the *brethren* to "love one another." Like a fond father impressing his children, how the Divine Teacher lingers over the lesson, "This is *My* commandment!"

If selfishness had guided His actions, we might have expected Him to demand all His people's love for Himself. But He claims no such monopoly. He not only encourages mutual affection, but He makes it the badge of disciple-

ship! He gives them at once its measure and motive. "Love one another, *as* I have loved you!" What a love was that!—it reached to the lowliest and humblest,—"Inasmuch as ye did it to the *least* of these, ye did it unto *Me*."

Ah! if such was the Elder Brother's love to His younger brethren, what should the love of these younger brothers be for one another! How humbling that there should be so much that is sadly and strangely unlike the spirit which our blessed Master sought to inculcate alike by precept and example! Individual Christians, why these bitter estrangements, these censorious words, these harsh judgments, this want of kind consideration of the feelings and failings of those who may differ from you? Why are your friendships so often like the summer brook, soon dried? You hope, ere long, to meet in glory. Doubtless, when you enter on that "sabbath of love," many a greeting will be

this, "Alas! my brother, that on earth I did not love thee more!"

Do you see the image of God in a professing believer? It is your duty to love him for the sake of that image. No church, no outward livery, no denominational creed, should prevent your owning and claiming him as a fellow-pilgrim and fellow-heir. It has been said of a portrait, however poor the painting, however unfinished the style, however faulty the touches, however coarse and unseemly the frame, yet if the *likeness* be faithful, we overlook many subordinate defects. So it is with the Christian: however plain the exterior, however rough the setting, or even manifold the blemishes still found cleaving to a partially sanctified nature, yet if the Redeemer's *likeness* be feebly and faintly traced there, we should love the copy for the sake of the Divine Original. There may be other bonds of association and intercourse linking spirit with spirit;—family

ties, mental congenialities, intellectual tastes, philanthropic pursuits; but that which ought to take the precedence of all, is the love of God's image in the brethren. What will heaven be but this love perfected—loving Christ, and beloved by those who love Him?

Reader! seek to love *Him* more, and you will love His people more. John had more love than the other disciples. Why? He drank deepest of the love within that Bosom on which he delighted to lean, every beat of which was love. "Walk," then, "in love!" Let it be the very foot-road you tread; let your way to heaven be paved with it. Soon shall we come to look within the portal. Then shall every jarring and dissonant note be merged into the sublime harmonies of "the new heavens and the new earth," and we shall all "see eye to eye!"

"ARM YOURSELVES LIKEWISE WITH THE SAME MIND."

11TH MORNING

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

Jesus wept.—JOHN XI. 35.

Sympathy. IT is an affecting thing to see a Great man in tears! "*Jesus wept!*" It was ever His delight to tread in the footsteps of sorrow—to heal the broken-hearted—turning aside from His own path of suffering to "weep with those that weep."

Bethany! That scene, that *word*, is a condensed volume of consolation for yearning and desolate hearts. What a majesty in those tears! He had just before been discoursing on Himself as the Resurrection and the Life—the next moment He is a Weeping Man by a human grave, melted in anguished sorrow at a bereaved one's side! Think of the funeral at the gate of Nain, reading its lesson to dejected myriads—"Let thy widows trust in me!" Think of the

farewell discourse to His disciples, when, muffling all His own foreseen and anticipated sorrows, He thought only of soothing and mitigating theirs! Think of the affecting pause in that silent procession to Calvary, when He turns round and stills the sobs of those who are tracking His steps with their weeping! Think of that wondrous epitome of human tenderness, just ere His eyes closed in their sleep of agony—in the mightiest crisis of all time—when filial love looked down on an anguished mother, and provided her a son and a home!

Ah, was there ever sympathy like this! Son! Brother! Kinsman! Saviour! all in one! The majesty of Godhead almost lost in the tenderness of the Friend. But so it *was*, and so it *is*. The heart of the now enthroned King beats responsive to the humblest of His sorrow-stricken people. "I am poor and needy, yet the Lord *carries me on His heart!*" (margin).

Let us "go and do likewise." Let us be ready, like our Lord, to follow the beck of misery,—"to deliver the needy when he crieth, the poor also, and him that hath no helper." Sympathy costs but little. Its recompense and return are great, in the priceless consolation it imparts. Few there are who undervalue it. Look at Paul—the weary, jaded prisoner,—chained to a soldier,—recently wrecked, about to stand before Cæsar. He reaches Appii Forum and the Three Taverns, dejected and depressed. Brethren come from Rome, a distance of sixty miles, to offer their *sympathy*. The aged man is cheered! His spirit, like Jacob's, "revived!" "He thanked God, and took courage!"

Reader! let "this mind," this holy, Christ-like *habit* be in you, which was also in your adorable Master. Delight, when opportunity occurs, to frequent the house of mourning,—to bind up the

widow's heart, and to dry the orphan's tears. If you can do nothing else, you can whisper into the ear of disconsolate sorrow those majestic solaces, which, rising first in the graveyard of Bethany, have sent their undying echoes through the world, and stirred the depths of ten thousand hearts. "Exercise your souls," says Butler, "in a loving sympathy with sorrow in every form. Soothe it, minister to it, succour it, revere it. It is the relic of Christ in the world, an image of the Great Sufferer, a shadow of the cross. It is a holy and venerable thing."

Jesus Himself "*looked* for some to take *pity*, but there was *none;* and for comforters, but He found *none!*" It shows how even *He* valued sympathy, and that, too, in its commonest form of "*pity*," though an ungrateful World denied it.

12TH MORNING.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"The Lord turned and looked upon Peter."—LUKE XXII. 61.

Fidelity in Rebuke.

JESUS never spake one unnecessarily harsh or severe word. He had a divine sympathy for the frailties and infirmities of a tried, and suffering, and tempted nature in others. He was forbearing to the ignorant, encouraging to the weak, tender to the penitent, loving to all,—yet how faithful was He as "the Reprover of sin!" Silent under His own wrongs, with what burning invective did He lay bare the Pharisees' masked corruption and hypocrisy! When His Father's name and temple were profaned, how did He sweep, with an avenging hand, the mammon-crowd away, replacing the superscription, "Holiness to the Lord," over the defiled altars!

Nor was it different with His own disciples. With what fidelity, when rebuke was needed, did He administer it: the withering reprimand conveyed, sometimes by an impressive *word* (Matt. xvi. 23); sometimes by a silent *look* (Luke xxii. 61). "Faithful always were the wounds of *this* Friend."

Reader! art thou equally faithful with thy Lord in rebuking evil; not with "the wrath of man, which worketh not the righteousness of God," but with a holy jealousy of His glory, feeling, with the sensitive honour of "the good soldier of Jesus Christ," that an affront offered to Him is offered to thyself? The giving of a wise reproof requires much Christian prudence and delicate discretion. It is not by a rash and inconsiderate exposure of failings that we must attempt to reclaim an erring brother. But neither, for the sake of a false peace, must we compromise fidelity; even friendship is too dearly purchased

by winking at sin. Perhaps, when Peter was led to call the Apostle who honestly reproved him. "Our beloved brother Paul," in nothing did he love his rebuker more, than for the honest boldness of his Christian reproof. If Paul had, in that crisis of the Church, with a timidity unworthy of him, evaded the ungracious task, what, humanly speaking, might have been the result?

How often does a seasonable reprimand, a faithful caution, save a lifetime of sin and sorrow! How many a death-bed has made the disclosure, "That kind warning of my friend put an arrest on my career of guilt; it altered my whole being; it brought me to the cross, touched my heart, and, by God's grace saved my soul!" On the other hand, how many have felt, when death has put his impressive seal on some close earthly intimacy, "This friend, or that friend,—I might have spoken a solemn word to him; but now he is no more;

the opportunity is lost, never to be recalled!"

Reader! see that you act not the spiritual coward. When tempted to sit silent when the name of God is slighted or dishonoured, think, *would Jesus have done so?*—would *He* have allowed the oath to go unrebuked—the lie to be uttered unchallenged — the Sabbath with impunity to be profaned? Where there is a natural diffidence which makes you shrink from a more bold and open reproof, remember much may be done to discountenance sin, by the silent holiness of demeanour, which refuses to smile at the unholy allusion or ribald jest. "A word spoken in due season, how good is it!" "Speak gently," yet speak faithfully: "be pitiful—be courteous:" yet "quit you like men, be strong!"

"ARM YOURSELVES LIKEWISE WITH THE SAME MIND."

13TH MORNING

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?"—JOHN XXI. 15.

Gentleness in Rebuke.

No word here of the erring disciple's past faithlessness; —his guilty cowardice—*unmentioned;*—his base denial—his oaths and curses, and treacherous desertion—all *unmentioned!* The memory of a threefold denial is *suggested*, and no more, by the threefold question of unutterable tenderness, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" When Jesus finds His disciples sleeping at the gate of Gethsemane, He rebukes them; but how is the rebuke disarmed of its poignancy by the merciful apology which is added—"The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak!" How different from *their* unkind insinuation regarding *Him*, when, in the vessel on Tiberias, "He was asleep"—"Master,

carest thou not that we perish!" The woman of Samaria is full of earthliness, carnality, sectarianism, guilt. Yet how gently the Saviour speaks to her—how forbearingly, yet faithfully, He directs the arrow of conviction to that seared and hardened conscience, till He lays it bleeding at His feet! Truly, "He will not break the bruised reed—He will not quench the smoking flax." By "the *goodness* of God," He would lead to repentance. When others are speaking of merciless violence, He can dismiss the most guilty of profligates with the words, "Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more."

How many have an unholy pleasure in finding a brother in the wrong,—blazing abroad his failings; administering rebuke, not in gentle forbearance and kindly expostulation, but with harsh and impatient severity! How beautifully did Jesus unite intense sensibility to sin, along with tenderest compassion for the

sinner, shewing in this that "He knoweth our frame!" Many a scholar needs gentleness in chastisement. The reverse would crush a sensitive spirit, or drive it to despair. Jesus tenderly "considers" the case of those He disciplines, "tempering the wind to the shorn lamb." In the picture of the good shepherd bearing home the wandering sheep, He illustrated by parable what He had often and again taught by His own example. No word of needless harshness or upbraiding uttered to the erring wanderer! Ingratitude is too deeply felt to need rebuke! In silent love, "He lays it on His shoulders rejoicing."

Reader! seek to mingle gentleness in all your rebukes; bear with the infirmities of others; make allowance for constitutional frailties; never say harsh things, if kind things will do as well; do not unnecessarily lacerate with recalling former delinquencies. In reproving another, let us rather feel how

much we need reproof ourselves. "Consider thyself," is a searching Scripture motto for dealing with an erring brother. Remember thy Lord's method of silencing fierce accusation—"Let him that is without sin cast the first stone." Moreover, anger and severity are not the successful means of reclaiming the backslider, or of melting the obdurate. Like the *smooth* stones with which David smote Goliath, *gentle* rebukes are generally the most powerful. The old fable of the traveller and his cloak has a moral here as in other things. The genial sunshine will effect its removal sooner than the rough tempest. It was said of Leighton, that "he rebuked faults so mildly, that they were never repeated, not because the admonished were afraid, but ashamed to do so."

"ARM YOURSELVES LIKEWISE WITH THE SAME MIND."

14TH MORNING.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"Who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself."—HEB. XII. 3.

Endurance of Contradiction.

WHAT endurance was this! Perfect truth in the midst of error; perfect love in the midst of ingratitude and coldness; perfect rectitude in the midst of perjury, violence, fraud; perfect constancy in the midst of contumely and desertion; perfect innocence, confronting every debased form of depravity and guilt; perfect patience, encountering every species of gross provocation—"oppressed and afflicted, He opened not His mouth!" "For my love" (in return for my love), "they are mine adversaries; *but*" (see His endurance!—the only species of revenge of which His sinless nature was capable) "*I give myself unto prayer!*" (Ps. cix. 4.)

Reader! "let this mind be in you,

which was also in Christ Jesus!" The greatest test of an earthly soldier's courage is *patient endurance!* The noblest trait of the spiritual soldier is the same. "Having done all *to stand*," "He *endured*, as seeing Him who is invisible!" Beware of the angry recrimination, the hasty ebullition of temper. Amid unkind insinuations—when motives are misrepresented, and reputation assailed; when good deeds are ridiculed, kind intentions coldly thwarted and repulsed, chilling reserve manifested where you expected nothing but friendship—what a triumph over natural impulse to manifest a spirit of meek endurance!—like a rainbow, radiant with the hues of heaven, resting peacefully amid the storms of derision and "the floods of ungodly men." What an opportunity of magnifying the "sustaining grace of God!" "It is a small thing for me to be judged of you, or of man's judgment; He that judgeth me

is the Lord." "The Lord is on my side, I will not fear what man can do unto me." "Blessed is the man that *endureth*." "He that *endureth* to the end, the same shall be saved."

If faithful to our God, we must expect to encounter contradiction in the same form which Jesus did—"the contradiction of *sinners*." It has been well said, "There is no cross of nails and wood erected now for the Christian, but there is one of words and looks which is never taken down." If believers are set as lights in the earth, lamps in the "city of destruction," we know that "he that doeth evil *hateth* the light." "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you!"

Weary and faint ones, exposed to the shafts of calumny and scorn because of your fidelity to your God;—encountering, it may be, the coldness and estrangement of those dear to you, who cannot, perhaps, sympathise in the holi-

ness of your walk and the loftiness of your aims, "consider *Him* that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, *lest* ye be weary and faint in your minds!" What is *your* "contradiction" to *His?* Soon your cross, whatever it be, will have an end. "The seat of the scorner" has no place in yonder glorious heaven, where all will be peace—no jarring note to disturb its blissful harmonies! Look forward to the great coronation-day of the Church triumphant,—the day of your divine Lord's appearing, when motives and aims, now misunderstood, will be vindicated, wrongs redressed, calumnies and aspersions wiped away. Meanwhile, "rejoice that you are counted worthy to suffer shame for His name."

"ARM YOURSELVES LIKEWISE WITH THE SAME MIND."

15TH MORNING.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"I do always those things that please Him."
—JOHN VIII. 29.

Pleasing God. WHAT a glorious motto for a man—"*I live for God!*" It is religion's truest definition. It is the essence of angelic bliss—the motive principle of angelic action; "Ye ministers of His that do His pleasure." The Lord of angels knew no higher, no *other* motive. It was, during His incarnation, the regulator and directory of His daily being. It supported Him amid the depressing sorrows of His woe-worn path. It upheld him in their awful termination in the garden and on the cross. For a moment, sinking human nature faltered under the load his Godhead sustained; but the thought of "pleasing God" nerved and revived Him. "Not my will, but *Thine* be done."

It is only when the love of God is shed abroad in the heart, that this animating desire to "please Him" can exist. In the holy bosom of Jesus, that love reigned paramount, admitting no rival—no competing affection. Though infinitely inferior in degree, it is the same impelling principle which leads His people still to link enjoyment with His service, and which makes consecration to Him of heart and life, its own best recompense and reward. "There is a gravitation," says one whose life was the holy echo of his words, "in the moral as in the physical world. When love to God is habitually in the ascendant, or occupying the place of will, it gathers round it all the other desires of the soul as satellites, and whirls them along with it in its orbit round the centre of attraction." *(Hewitson's Life.)* Till the heart, then, be changed, the believer cannot have "this testimony that he *pleases God.*" The world, self, sin—these be

the gods of the unregenerate soul. And even *when* changed, alas that there should be so many ebbings and flowings in our tide of devotedness! Jesus could say, "I do *always* those things that please the Father." Glory to God burned within His bosom like a living fire. "Many waters could not quench it." His were no fitful and inconstant frames and feelings, but the persistent habit of a holy life, which had the one end in view, from which it never diverged or deviated.

Let it be so, in some lowly measure, with us. Let God's services not be the mere livery of high days,—of set times and seasons; but, like the alabaster box of ointment, let us be ever giving forth the fragrant perfume of holiness. Even when the shadows of trial are falling around us, let us "pass through the cloud" with the sustaining motive—"All my wish, O God, is to please and glorify Thee! By giving or taking—by smit-

ing or healing—by the sweet cup or the bitter—'Father, glorify thy name!'" "I don't want to be weary of God's dealings with me," said Bickersteth, on his death-bed; "I want to glorify Jesus in them, and to find Him more precious." Do I shrink from trials—duties—crosses—because involving hardships and self-denial, or because frowned on by the world? Let the thought of God's approving countenance be enough. Let me dread no censure, if conscious of acting in accordance with *His* will. Let the Apostle's monitory word determine many a perplexing path.—"If I please men, I am not the servant of Christ."

"ARM YOURSELVES LIKEWISE WITH THE SAME MIND."

16TH MORNING.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"Being grieved for the hardness of their hearts."
MARK III. 5.

Grief at Sin.

ON this one occasion only is the expression used with reference to Jesus—(what intensity of emotion does it denote, spoken of a sinless nature!)—"He looked round on them *with anger!*" Never did He grieve for Himself. His intensest sorrows were reserved for those who were tampering with their own souls, and dishonouring His God. The continual spectacle of moral evil, thrust on the gaze of spotless purity, made His earthly history one consecutive history of grief, one perpetual "cross and passion."

In the tears shed at the grave of Bethany, sympathy, doubtless, for the world's myriad mourners, had its own share (the bereaved could not part with

so precious a tribute in their hours of sadness,) but a far more impressive cause was one undiscerned by the weeping sisters and sorrowing crowd ;—His knowledge of the deep and obdurate impenitence of those who were about to gaze on the mightiest of miracles, only to "despise, and wonder, and perish." "*Jesus wept!*"—but His profoundest anguish was over resisted grace, abused privileges, scorned mercy. It was the Divine Artificer mourning over His shattered handiwork ;—the Almighty Creator weeping over His ruined world; —God, the God-man, "grieving" over the Temple of the soul, a humiliating wreck of what once was made "after His own image!"

Can we sympathize in any respect with such exalted tears? Do we mourn for sin, our *own* sin—the deep insult which it inflicts on God—the ruinous consequences it entails on ourselves? Do we grieve at sin in *others?* Do we

know anything of "vexing our souls," like righteous Lot, "from day to day," with the world's "unlawful deeds,"—the stupid hardness and obduracy of the depraved heart, which resists alike the appliances of wrath and love, judgment and mercy? Ah! it is easy, in general terms, to condemn vice, and to utter harsh, severe, and cutting denunciations on the guilty: it is easy to pass uncharitable comments on the inconsistencies or follies of others; but to "*grieve*" as our Lord did, is a different thing;—to mourn over the hardness of heart, and yet to have the burning desire to teach it better things;—to hate, as He did, the *sin*, but, like Him also, to love the *sinner!*

Reader! look specially to your own spirit. In one respect, the example of Jesus falls short of your case. He had no sin of His own to mourn over. He could only commiserate others. *Your* intensest grief must begin with *yourself*. Like the watchful Levite of old, be a

guardian at the temple-gates of your own soul. Whatever be your besetting iniquity, your constitutional bias to sin, seek to guard it with wakeful vigilance. Grieve at the thought of incurring one passing shadow of displeasure from so kind and compassionate a Saviour. Let this be a holy preservative in your every hour of temptation, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

Grieve for a perishing world—a groaning creation fettered and chained in unwilling "subjection to vanity." Do what you can, by effort, by prayer, to hasten on the hour of jubilee, when its ashy robes of sin and sorrow shall be laid aside, and, attired in the "beauties of holiness," it shall exult in "the glorious liberty of the sons of God!"

"ARM YOURSELVES LIKEWISE WITH THE SAME MIND."

17TH MORNING.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

'He riseth from supper, and laid aside His garments; and took a towel, and girded Himself. After that He poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet."—JOHN XIII. 4, 5.

Humility. WHAT a matchless picture of humility! At the very moment when His throne was in view;—angel-anthems floating in His ear;—the hour come "when He was to depart out of this world;" possessing a lofty consciousness of His peerless dignity, that "He came *from* God and went *to* God;" THEN "Jesus took a towel, and girded Himself, and began to wash the disciples' feet!" All heaven was ready at that moment to cast their combined crowns at His feet. But the High and the Lofty One inhabiting eternity is on earth "as one that serveth!" "That *infinite stoop!* it sinks all creature humiliation to nothing, and renders it im-

possible for a creature to *humble* himself."—(*Evans.*)

Humility follows Him from His unhonoured birthplace to His borrowed grave. It throws a subdued splendour over all He did. "The poor in spirit," —the "mourner,"—the "meek,"—claim His first beatitudes. He was severe only to one class—those who looked down upon others. However He is employed; whether performing His works of miraculous power, or receiving angel-visitants, or taking little children in His arms, He stands forth "clothed with humility." Nay, this humility becomes more conspicuous as He draws nearer glory. Before His death, He calls His disciples "*Friends;*" subsequently, it is "*Brethren,*" "*Children.*" How sad the contrast between the Master and His disciples! Two hours had not elapsed after He washed their feet, when "there was a strife among them which should be the greatest!"

Let the mental image of that lowly Redeemer be ever bending over us. His example may well speak in silent impressiveness, bringing us down from our pedestal of pride. There surely can be no labour of love too humiliating when *He* stooped so low. Let us be content to take the humblest place;—not envious of the success or exaltation of another; not, "like Diotrephes, loving pre-eminence;" but willing to be thought little of; saying with the Baptist, with our eye on our Lord, "He must increase, but I must decrease!"

How much we have cause to be humble for!—the constant cleaving of defilement to our souls; and even what is partially good in us, how mixed with imperfection, self-seeking, arrogance, vain-glory! A proud Christian is a contradiction in terms. The Seraphim of old (type of the Christian Church, and of believers) had six wings—*two* were for errands of love, but "with *four*

he *covered* himself!" It has been beautifully said, "You lie nearest the River of Life when you *bend* to it; you cannot drink, but as you *stoop*." The corn of the field, as it ripens, bows its head; so the Christian, as he ripens in the divine life, bends in this lowly grace. Christ speaks of His people as "lilies"—they are "lilies of *the Valley*," they can only grow in the shade!

"Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God." "Go" with what Rutherford calls "a low sail." It is the livery of your blessed Master; the family badge—the family likeness. "With this man will I dwell, even with him that is *humble*." Yes! the humble, sanctified heart is God's *second Heaven!*

"ARM YOURSELVES LIKEWISE WITH THE SAME MIND."

18TH MORNING

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter."—
ISA. LIII. 7.

Patience. How great was the *patience* of Jesus! Even among His own disciples, how forbearingly He endured their blindness, their misconceptions and hardness of heart! Philip had been for three years with Him, yet he had "not known Him!"—all that time he had remained in strange and culpable ignorance of his Lord's dignity and glory. See how tenderly Jesus bears with him;—giving him nothing in reply for his confession of ignorance but unparalleled promises of grace!—Peter, the honoured and trusted, becomes a renegade and a coward. Justly might his dishonoured Lord, stung with such unrequited love, have cut the unworthy cumberer down. But He spares him, bears with him, gently rebukes him, and loves him more than

ever!—See the Divine Sufferer in the terminating scenes of His own ignominy and woe. How patient!—"As a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth." In these awful moments, outraged Omnipotence might have summoned twelve legions of angels and put into the hand of each a vial of wrath. But He submits in meek, majestic silence. Verily, in *Him* "patience had her *perfect* work."

Think of this same patience with His Church and people since He ascended to glory. The years upon years He has borne with their perverse resistance of His grace, their treacherous ingratitude, their wayward wanderings, their hardness of heart and contempt of His holy word. Yet, behold the forbearing love of this Saviour God! His hand of mercy is "stretched out still!"

Child of God! art thou now undergoing some bitter trial? The way of thy God, it may be, all mystery; no footprints of

love traceable in the chequered path; no light in the clouds above; no ray in the dark future. *Be patient!* "The Lord is good to them that *wait* for Him." "They that *wait* on the Lord shall renew their strength!"—Or hast thou been long tossed on some bed of sickness—days of pain and nights of weariness appointed thee? *Be patient!* "I trust this groaning," said a suffering saint, "is not murmuring." God, by this very affliction, is nurturing within thee this beauteous grace which shone so conspicuously in the character of thy dear Lord. With Him it was a lovely *habit* of the soul. With thee, the "tribulation" which worketh "patience" is needful discipline. "It is *good* for a man that he should both hope and quietly *wait* for the salvation of God."—Art thou suffering some unmerited wrong or unkindness, exposed to harsh and wounding accusations, hard for flesh and blood to bear? *Be patient!* Beware of hasti-

ness of speech or temper; remember how much evil may be done by a few inconsiderate words, "spoken unadvisedly with the lip." Think of Jesus standing before a human tribunal, in the silent submissiveness of conscious innocence and integrity. Leave thy cause with God. Let this be the only form of thy complaint, "O God, I am oppressed; undertake Thou for me!"

"In patience," then "possess ye your souls." Let it not be a grace for peculiar seasons, called forth on peculiar exigencies; but an habitual frame manifested in the calm serenity of a daily walk;—placidity amid the little fretting annoyances of every-day life— a fixed purpose of the heart to wait upon God, and cast its every burden upon Him.

19TH MORNING.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"As the Father gave me commandment, even so I do." JOHN XIV. 31.

Subjection. JESUS as God-man had omnipotence slumbering in His arm. He had the hoarded treasures of eternity in his grasp. He had only to "speak, and it was done." But as an example to His people, His whole life on earth was one impressive act of subordination and dependence. At Nazareth He was "subject to His parents." There He remained in studied obscurity occupying for thirty years a lowly hut, willing to continue in a state of seclusion, till the Father's summons called Him to His appointed work.

At His baptism, sinless Himself, He gives this reason for receiving a sinner's rite at a sinner's hands—"Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh Me to fulfil all righteousness." The same

beautiful spirit of filial *subjection* shines conspicuous amid His acts of stupendous power. "Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me; and I know that Thou hearest Me always; but because of the people which stand by, I said it, that they may believe that Thou hast sent Me." Even among His own disciples His language is, "I am among you as He that serveth." With an act of submission He closed His pilgrimage and work of love. "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit."

What an example to us, in all this, is our beloved Lord! Surely, if *He*, "God only wise"—the Self-existent One, to whom "all power was committed;"—the Sinless One, never liable to err, on whom "the Spirit was poured without measure"—if *He* manifested such habitual dependence on His heavenly Father, how earnestly ought *we*, weak, erring, fallible creatures, to seek to live every

hour—every moment—as pensioners on God's grace and love, following in all things His directing hand! As the servant has his eyes on his master, or the child on its parent, "so should our eyes be on the Lord our God." Howsoever He speaks, be it ours with all docility to follow the voice, endorsing every utterance of providence, and every precept of Scripture, with our Lord's own words, "*This is the Father's will!*"

Beware of self-dependence. The first step in spiritual declension is this:—"Let him that *thinketh he standeth!*" The secret of real strength is this:—"*Kept* by the *power of God!*"

How it sweetens all our blessings, and alleviates all our sorrows, to regard both as emanations from a loving Father's hand. Even if we should be like the disciples of old, "*constrained*" to go into the ship; if all should be darkness and tempest,—frowning providences,—"the wind contrary;" how blessed to feel that

in embarking on the unquiet element, "the Lord has bidden us!" Paul could not speak even of taking an earthly journey, without the parenthesis, ("if the Lord will.") How many trials, and sorrows, and *sins*, would it save us, if the same were the habitual regulator of our daily life! It would lead to calm contentment with our lot, hushing every disquieting suggestion with the thought that that lot, with all that is apparently adverse in it, was *ordained* for us. It would teach us not to be aspiring after *great* things, but humbly to wait the will and purposes of a wise Provider; not to go *before* our Heavenly Guide, but to *follow* Him, saying, in meek subjection, "Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty, neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me . . . . . my soul is even as a weaned child!"

20TH MORNING.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again.
—1 PETER ii. 23.

Not Retaliating.

WHAT a common dictate of the fallen and unregenerate heart to resent and recriminate! How alien to natural feeling to answer cutting taunts, and meet unmerited wrong, with the Divine method the Gospel prescribes—"Overcome evil with good!" It was in the closing scenes of the Saviour's humiliation, when, silent and unresenting, He stood "dumb before His shearers," that this beautiful feature in His character was most wondrously manifested; but it beams forth also for our imitation in the ordinary and less prominent incidents of His pilgrimage.

When He met Nathaniel of Cana in Galilee, He found him clinging to an unreasonable prejudice—"Can any good

thing come out of Nazareth ?" The severe remark is allowed to pass unnoticed. Overlooking the unkind insinuation, the Saviour fixes on the favourable feature of his character, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!"—After His resurrection, he appears to His disciples. They were cowering in shame, half afraid to confront the glance of injured goodness. He breathes on them, and says, "Peace be unto you!"—Peter was the one of all the rest who had most reason to dread estranged looks and upbraiding words; but a special message is sent, to reassure that trembling spirit that there was no alienation in the unresentful Heart he had so deeply wounded;—"Go and tell the disciples . . . and *Peter!*"—Even when Judas first revealed himself to his Lord as the betrayer, we believe it was not in bitter irony or rebuke, but in the fulness of pitying tenderness, that Jesus addressed him, "Friend, wherefore art

thou come?"—Tears and prayers were His only revenge on the city and scene of His murder. "Beginning at Jerusalem," was the closing illustration of a spirit "not of this world"—a significant parting testimony that in the bosom that uttered it, retaliation had no place.

More than one of the disciples seem to have imbibed much of this "mind" of their Lord. "We owe St. Paul," says Augustine, "to the death of Stephen;" —"they stoned Stephen . . . . and he kneeled down and cried with a loud voice, Lord! lay not this sin to their charge."

Take another example: The great Apostle of the Gentiles felt himself under a painful necessity faithfully to rebuke Peter in presence of the whole Church. He had *recorded* that rebuke, too, in one of his epistles. It was thus to be handed down to every age as a permanent and humiliating evidence of the wavering inconstancy of his fellow-labourer. Peter,

doubtless, must have felt acutely the severity of the chastisement. Does he resent it? He, too, puts on record, long after, in one of his own epistles, a sentence regarding his Rebuker, but it is this—"Our *beloved brother* Paul!"

Reader! when tempted to utter the harsh word, or give the cutting or hasty answer, seek to check yourself with the question, "Is this the reply my Saviour would have given?" If your fellow-men should prove unkind, inconsiderate, ungrateful, be it yours to refer the cause to God. Speak of the faults of others only in prayer; manifesting more sorrow for the sin of the censorious and unkind, than for the evil inflicted on yourselves.—*Retaliate!* No such word should have a place in the Christian's vocabulary. *Retaliate!* If I cherish such a spirit towards my brother, how can I meet that brother in heaven?—"But ye have not so learned Christ."

21ST MORNING.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"And He bearing His cross."—JOHN XIX. 17.

Bearing the Cross.

WHEN did Jesus bear the cross? Not that moment alone, surely, when the bitter tree was placed on His shoulders, on the way to Golgotha. Its vision may be said to have risen before Him in His infant dreams in Bethlehem's cradle; there, rather, its reality began; and He ceased not to carry it, till His work was finished, and the victory won! A *cloud* of old, hovered over the mercy-seat in the tabernacle and temple. So it was with the Great Antitype—the living Mercy-Seat,—He had ever a cloud of woe hanging over Him. "He *carried* our sorrows."

Reader! dwell much and often under the shadow of your Lord's cross, and it will lead you to think lightly of your

own! If *He* gave utterance to not one murmuring word, canst *thou* complain? "If we were deeper students of His bitter anguish, we should think less of the ripplings of our waves, amidst His horrible tempest."—(*Evans.*) The saint's cross assumes many and diverse shapes. Sometimes it is the bitter trial, the crushing pang of bereavement,—desolate households, and aching hearts. Sometimes it is the crucifixion of sin, the determined battling with "lusts which war against the soul." Sometimes it is the resistance of the evil maxims and practices of a lying world;—vindicating the honour of Christ, in the midst, it may be, of taunt, and obloquy, and shame. And as there are different crosses, so there are different ways of bearing them. To some, God says, "Put your shoulder to the burden; lift it up, and bear it on; work, and toil, and labour!" To others, He says, "Be still, bear it, and *suffer!*"

Believer! thy cross may be hard to endure; it may involve deep struggles—tears by day, watchings by night; bear it meekly, patiently, justifying God's wisdom in laying it on. Rejoice in the assurance that He gives not one atom more of earthly trial than He sees to be really needful; not one redundant thorn pierces your feet. In the very bearing of the cross for *His* sake, there are mighty compensations. What new views of your Saviour's love! His truth, His promises, His sustaining grace, His sufferings, His glory! What new filial nearness; increased delight in prayer; an inner sunshine when it is darkest without! The waves cover you, but underneath them all are "the everlasting arms!"

Do not look out for a situation *without* crosses. Be not over anxious about "smooth paths;"—leaving your God, as Orpah did Naomi, just when the cross requires to be carried. Immoderate

earthly enjoyments,—unbroken earthly prosperity,—write upon these "*Beware!*" You may live to see them become your greatest trials!

Remember the old saying, "No cross no crown." The sun of the saint's life generally struggles through "weeping clouds." One of the loveliest passages of Scripture is that in which the portals of heaven being opened, we overhear this dialogue between two ransomed ones—"And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes, and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, *These are they which came out of great tribulation!*"

"ARM YOURSELVES LIKEWISE WITH THE SAME MIND."

22D MORNING.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"The zeal of Thine House hath eaten me up."
—JOHN II. 17.

Holy Zeal. "ZEAL is a principle; enthusiasm is a feeling. The one is the spark of a sanguine temperament and overheated imagination. The other, a sacred flame, kindled at God's altar, and burning in God's shrine."—*(Vaughan.)* Such was the holy, heavenly zeal of our Great Exemplar! His were no transient outbursts of ardour, which time cooled, and difficulties impeded. His life was one indignant protest against sin; one ceaseless current of undying love for souls, which all the malignity of foes, and unkindness of friends, could not for one moment divert from its course. Even when He rises from the dead, and we imagine His work at an end, His zeal only meditates fresh deeds of love. "Still His heart

and His care," says Goodwin, "is upon doing more." Having now dispatched that great work on earth, He sends His disciples word that He is hastening to heaven as fast as He can, to do another. (John xx. 17.)

Reader! do you know anything of this zeal, which "many waters could not quench?" See that, like your Lord's, it be steady, sober, consistent, undeviating. How many are, like the children of Ephraim, "carrying bows,"—all zealous when zeal demands no sacrifice, but "turning their backs in the day of battle!" Others "running well" for a time, but gradually "hindered" through the benumbing influences of worldliness, selfishness and sin.—Two disciples, apparently equally devoted and zealous, send through Paul, in one of his epistles, a conjoint Christian salutation—"Luke and Demas greet you." A few years afterwards, thus he writes from his Roman dungeon—"Only *Luke* is with me," "*Demas* hath

forsaken me, having loved this present world!"

While zeal is commendable, remember the Apostle's qualification, "It is good to be zealously affected always in a *good* thing." There is in these days much base coin current, *called* "zeal," which bears not the image and superscription of Jesus. There is zeal for church-membership and party; zeal for creeds and dogmas; zeal for figments and non-essentials. "From such turn aside." Your Lord stamped with His example and approval no such counterfeits. *His* zeal was ever brought to bear on two objects, and two objects alone—*the glory of God and the good of man*. Be it so with *you*. Enter, first of all, (as He did the earthly temple,) the sanctuary of *your own heart*, with "the scourge of small cords." Drive out every unhallowed intruder there. Do not suffer yourself to be deceived. Others may call such jealous searchings of spirit

"sanctimoniousness" and "enthusiasm." But remember, to be *almost saved* is to be *altogether lost!*—to be zealous about everything but "the one thing needful," is an insult to God and your everlasting interests!

Have a zeal for *others*. Dying myriads are around you. As a member of the Christian priesthood, it becomes you to rush in with your censer and incense between the living and the dead, "that the plague may be stayed!"

Be it yours to say, "Blessed Jesus! I am *Thine!*—Thine only!—Thine wholly!—Thine for ever! I am willing to follow Thee, and (if need be) to *suffer* for Thee. I am ready at Thy bidding to leave the homestead in the valley, and to face the cutting blasts of the mountain. Take me—use me for Thy glory. 'Lord! what wilt Thou have me to do?'"

23D MORNING.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"Who went about doing good."—ACTS x. 38.

Benevolence.

"CHRIST'S great end," says Richard Baxter, "was to save men from their *sins;* but He delighted to save them from their *sorrows.*" His heart bled for human misery. Benevolence brought Him from heaven; benevolence followed His steps wherever He went on earth. The journeys of the Divine Philanthropist were marked by tears of thankfulness, and breathings of grateful love. The helpless, the blind, the lame, the desolate, rejoiced at the sound of His footfall. Truly might it be said of Him, "When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me" (Job xxix. 11). All suffering hearts were a magnet to Jesus. It was not more His prerogative than His happiness to turn tears

into smiles. One of the few pleasures which on earth gladdened the spirit of the "Man of sorrows" was the pleasure of *doing good*—soothing grief, and alleviating misery. Next to the joy of the widow of Nain when her son was restored, was the joy in the bosom of the Divine Restorer! He often went out of His way to be kind. A journey was not grudged, even if *one* aching spirit were to be soothed (Mark v. 1; John iv. 4, 5). Nor were His kindnesses dispensed through the intervention of others. They were all personal acts. His own hand healed. His own voice spake. His own footsteps lingered on the threshold of bereavement, or at the precincts of the tomb. Ah! had the princes of this world known the loving tenderness and unselfishness of *that* heart, "they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory!"

Reader! do you know anything of such active benevolence? Have you never felt the *luxury* of doing good?

Have you never felt, that in making *others* happy, you make *yourself* so? that, by a great law of your being, enunciated by the Divine Patron and Pattern of Benevolence, "It is more blessed to give than to receive?" Has God enriched you with this world's goods? Seek to view yourself as a consecrated medium for dispensing them to others. Beware alike of penurious hoarding and selfish extravagance. How sad the case of those whose lot God has made thus to abound with temporal mercies, who have gone to the grave unconscious of diminishing one drop of human misery, or making one of the world's myriad aching hearts happier!—How the example of *Jesus* rebukes the cold and calculating kindnesses—the mite-like offerings of many even of His own people! "whose libation is not like His, from the brim of an overflowing cup, but from the bottom—from the *dregs!*"

You may have little to give. Your

sphere and means may be alike limited. But remember God can be as much glorified by the trifle saved from the earnings of poverty, as by the splendid benefaction from the lap of plenty. "The Lord loveth a *cheerful* giver."

The nobler part of Christian benevolence is not vast largesses, munificent pecuniary sacrifices. "*He went about* doing good." The merciful visit,—the friendly word,—the look of sympathy, —the cup of cold water,—the little unostentatious service,—the giving without thought or hope of recompense,—the kindly "considering of the poor"—anticipating their wants—studying their comforts;—these are what God values and loves. They are "loans" to Himself—tributary streams to "the river of *His* pleasure;"—they will be acknowledged at last as such—"Ye did it unto *Me*."

24TH MORNING.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"Jesus saith unto him, Get thee hence, Satan.' — MATT. IV 10.

Firmness in Temptation.

THERE is an awful intensity of meaning in the words, as applied to Jesus, "He *suffered*, being tempted!" Though incapable of sin, there was, in the refined sensibilities of His holy nature, that which made temptation unspeakably fearful. What must it have been to confront the Arch-traitor?—to stand face to face with the foe of His throne, and His universe? But the "prince of this world" came, and found "nothing in Him." Billow after billow of Satanic violence spent its fury, in vain, on the Living Rock!

Reader! you have still the same malignant enemy to contend with; assailing you in a thousand insidious forms; marvellously adapting his assaults to

your circumstances, your temperament, your mental bias, your master passion! There is no place, where "Satan's seat" is not; "the whole world lieth in the Wicked one."—(1 John v. 19.) He has his whispers for the ear of childhood; hoary age is not inaccessible to his wiles. "*All this will I give thee*"---is still his bribe to deny Jesus and to "mind earthly things." He will meet you in the crowd; he will follow you to the solitude; his is a sleepless vigilance!

Are you bold in repelling him as your Master was? Are you ready with the retort to every foul suggestion, "Get thee hence, Satan"? Cultivate a tender sensitiveness about sin. The finest barometers are the most sensitive. Whatever be your besetting frailty—whatever bitter or baleful passion you are conscious aspires to the mastery—watch it, crucify it, "nail it to your Lord's cross." *You* may despise "the day of

small things"—the Great Adversary does *not*. He knows the power of *littles;* —that little by little consumes and eats out the vigour of the soul. And once the retrograde movement in the spiritual life begins, who can predict where it may end?—the going on "from weakness to weakness," instead of "from strength to strength." Make no compromises; never join in the ungodly amusement, or venture on the questionable path, with the plea, "It does me no harm." The Israelites, on entering Canaan, instead of obeying the Divine injunction of extirpating their enemies, made a hollow truce with them. What was the result? Years upon years of tedious warfare. "They were scourges in their sides and thorns in their eyes!" It is quaintly, but truthfully said by an old writer, "The candle will never burn clear, while there is a *thief* in it. Sin indulged, in the conscience, is like Jonah in the ship, which causeth such a tempest, that the

conscience is like a troubled sea, whose waters cannot rest."—(*Thomas Brooks.*)

"Keep," then, "thy heart with all diligence," or, (as it is in the forcible original Hebrew,) "keep thy heart *above all keeping*," "for out of it are the issues of life" (Prov. iv. 23). Let this ever be our preservative against temptation, "How would *Jesus* have acted here? would *He* not have recoiled, like the sensitive plant, from the remotest contact with sin? Can *I* think of dishonouring Him by tampering with His enemy;—incurring from his own lips the bitter reflection of injured love, 'I am wounded in the house of my friends'?"

He tells us the secret of our preservation and safety, "Simon! Simon! Satan hath desired to have thee, that he might sift thee as wheat; *but I* have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not!"

25TH MORNING.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"This man receiveth sinners."—LUKE xv. 2.

Receiving Sinners.

THE ironical taunt of proud and censorious Pharisees formed the glory of him who came "not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance." Publicans and outcasts; those covered with a deeper than any bodily leprosy—laid bare their wounds to the "Great Physician;" and as conscious guilt and timid penitence crept abashed and imploring to His feet, they found nothing but a forgiving and a gracious welcome!

"His ways" were not as "man's ways!" The "watchmen," in the Canticles, "smote" the disconsolate one seeking her lost Lord; they tore off her veil, mocking with chilling unkindness her anguished tears. Not so "the Chief Shepherd and Bishop of souls." "*This*

man *receiveth* sinners!" See at Nicodemus, stealing under the shadows of night to elude observation—type of the thousand thousand who in every age have gone trembling in their night of sin and sorrow to this Heavenly Friend! Does Jesus punish his timidity by shutting His door against him, spurning him from his presence?—"He will not break the bruised reed, He will not quench the smoking flax!"

And He is still the same! He who arrested a persecutor in his blasphemies, and tuned the lips of an expiring felon with faith and love, is at this hour standing with all the garnered treasures of Redemption in His hand, proclaiming, "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out!"

Are we from this to think lightly of sin? or by example and conduct to palliate and overlook its enormity? Not so: sin, *as* sin can never be sufficiently stamped with the brand of reprobation.

But we must seek carefully to distinguish between the offence and the offender. Nothing should be done on our part by word or deed to mock the penitential sighings of a guilty spirit, or send the trembling outcast away, with the despairing feeling of "*No hope.*" "This man receiveth sinners," and shall not *we?* Does *He* suffer the veriest dregs of human depravity to crouch unbidden at His feet, and to gaze on His forgiving countenance with the uplifted eye of hope, and shall *we* dare to deal out harsh, and severe, and crushing verdicts on an offending (it may be a *deeply* offending) brother? Shall we pronounce "crimson" and "scarlet" sins and sinners beyond the pale of mercy, when *Jesus* does not? Nay, rather, when wretchedness, and depravity, and backsliding cross our path, let it not be with the bitter taunt or the ironical retort that we bid them away. Let us bear,—endure,—remonstrate,—deal tenderly.

Jesus *did* so, Jesus *does* so! Ah! if we had within us His unconquerable love of souls; His yearning desire for the everlasting happiness of sinners, we should be more frequently in earnest expostulation and affectionate appeal with those who have hitherto got no other than harsh thoughts and repulsive words. If this "mind" really were in us, "which was also in Him," we should more frequently ask ourselves, "Have I done all I *might* have done to pluck this brand from the burning? Have I remembered what grace *has* wrought, what grace *can* do?"

"Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins!"

"ARM YOURSELVES LIKEWISE WITH THE SAME MIND."

26TH MORNING

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"Neither was guile found in His mouth."—1 PET. II. 22.

Guilelessness. How rare, and all the more beautiful because of its rarity, is a purely *guileless* spirit! A crystalline medium through which the transparent light of heaven comes and goes; open, candid, just, honourable, sincere, scorning every unfair dealing, every hollow pretension, every narrow prejudice. Wherever such characters exist, they are like "apples of gold, in pictures of silver."

Such, in all the loveliness of sinless perfection, was the Son of God! His guilelessness shining the more conspicuously amid the artful and malignant subtlety alike of men and devils. Passing by manifold instances in the course of His ministry, look at its manifestation, as the hour of His death approached.

When, on the night of his apprehension, He confronts the assassin band, in meek majesty He puts the question, "Whom seek ye?" They say to him, "Jesus of Nazareth." In guileless innocence, he replies, "I am He!" "Art Thou the King of the Jews?" asks Pilate, a few hours after. An evasive answer might again have purchased immunity from suffering and indignity, but once more the lips which scorned the semblance of evasion reply, "Thou sayest!"

How He loved the same spirit in His people! "Behold," said He of Nathanael, "an Israelite indeed, in whom is *no guile!*" That upright man had, we may suppose, been day after day kneeling in prayer under his fig-tree, with an open and candid spirit—

> "Musing on the law he taught,
> And waiting for the Lord he loved."

See how the Saviour honoured him; setting His own divine seal on the loveli-

ness of this same spirit!—Take one other example: when the startling,—saddening announcement is made to the disciples, "One of you shall betray me;" they do not accuse one another; they attempt to throw no suspicion on Judas; each in trembling apprehension suspects only his own treacherous heart, "Lord, is it I?"

How much of a different "mind" is there abroad! In the school of the world (this "*painted* world,") how much is there of what is called "policy," double-dealing!—accomplishing its ends by tortuous means; outward artificial polish, often only a cloak for baseness and selfishness!—in the daily interchange of business, one seeking to overreach the other by wily arts;—sacrificing principle for temporal advantage. There is nothing so derogatory to religion as aught allied to such a spirit among Christ's people—any such blots on the "living epistles." "Ye

are the light of the world." That world is a quick observer. It is sharp to detect inconsistencies,—slow to forget them. The true Christian has been likened to an *anagram*—you ought to be able to read him up and down, every way!

Be all reality, no counterfeit. Do not pass for current coin what is base alloy. Let transparent honour and sincerity regulate all your dealings; despise all meanness; avoid the sinister motive, the underhand dealing; aim at that unswerving love of truth that would scorn to stoop to base compliances and unworthy equivocations; live more under the power of the purifying and ennobling influences of the gospel. Take its golden rule as the matchless directory for the daily transactions of life—"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

27TH MORNING.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work."—JOHN IX. 4.

Activity in Duty. How constant and unremitting was Jesus in the service of His Heavenly Father! "He rose a great while before day;"—and when His secret communion was over, His public work began. It mattered not to Him where He was: whether on the bosom of the deep, or a mountain slope,—in the desert, or at a well side,—the "gracious words" ever "proceeded out of His mouth." We find, on one touching occasion, exhausted nature sinking, after a day of unremitting duty;—in crossing in a vessel the Lake of Tiberias,—"*He fell asleep!*" (Matt. viii.) He redeemed every precious moment; His words to the Pharisee seem a *formula* for all, "Simon, I have somewhat to say unto *thee!*"

Oh, how our most unceasing activities pale into nothing before such an example as this! Would that we could remember that each of us has some great mission to perform for God;—that religion is not a thing of dreamy sentimentalism, but of energetic practical action; moreover, that no trade, no profession, no position, however high or however humble in the scale of society, can disqualify for this life of Christian activity and usefulness! Who were the Writers in the Bible? We have among them a King—a Lawgiver—a Herdsman—a Publican—a Physician! Nor is it to high spheres, or to great services only, that God looks. The widow's mite and Mary's "alabaster box of ointment" are recorded as examples for imitation by the Holy Ghost, while many more munificent deeds are passed by unrecorded. We believe that God says, regarding the attempt of many a humble Christian to serve Him by active duty, "I saw that effort, that *feeble*

effort, to serve and glorify Me; it was the very *feebleness* of it I loved!"

Did it never strike you, notwithstanding the *dignity* of Christ, and the *activity* of Christ, how little success comparatively He met with in His public work? We read of no *numerous* conversions; no Pentecostal revivals in the course of His ministry. May not this well encourage in the absence of great outward results? He sets up no higher standard than this —"She hath done what she could." An artist may be *great* in painting a peasant as well as a king—*it is the way he does it.* Yes, and if laid aside from the *activities* of the Christian life, we can equally glorify God by *passive endurance.* "Who am I," said Luther, when he witnessed the patience of a great sufferer, "who am I? a wordy preacher in comparison with this great doer."

Reader! forget not the motive of our motto verse, "*The night cometh!*" Soon our tale shall be told; our little day is

flitting fast, the shadows of night are falling. "Our span length of time," as Rutherford says, "will come to an inch." What if the eleventh hour should strike after having been "all the day *idle*"? A long lifetime of opportunities suffered to pass unemployed and unimproved, and absolutely *nothing* done for God! A judgment-day come—our golden moments squandered—our talents untraded on—our work undone—met at the bar of Heaven with the withering repulse, "Inasmuch as ye did it *not*." "The time we have lost," says Richard Baxter, "cannot be recalled; should we not then redeem and improve the little that remains? If a traveller sleep or trifle most of the day, he must travel so much the faster in the evening, or fall short of his journey's end."

"ARM YOURSELVES LIKEWISE WITH THE SAME MIND."

28TH MORNING.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"But committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously."—1 PETER II. 23.

Committing our way to God.

WITH what perfect and entire confidingness did Jesus commit Himself to His Heavenly Father's guidance! He loved to call Him, "My Father!" There was music in that name, which enabled Him to face the most trying hour, and to drink the most bitter cup. The scoffing taunt arose at the scene of crucifixion, "He trusted in God that He would deliver Him, let Him deliver Him!" It failed to shake, for one moment, His unswerving confidence, even when the sensible tokens of the Divine presence were withdrawn; the realized consciousness of God's abiding love sustained Him still;—"My God! my God!"

How many a perplexity should we save ourselves, by thus implicitly "com-

mitting ourselves," as He did, to God! In seasons of darkness and trouble--when our way is shut up with thorns, to lift the confiding eye of faith to Him, and say, "I am oppressed, undertake for me!" How blessed to feel that He directs all that befalls us; that no contingencies can frustrate His plans; that the way He leads us is not only *a* "right way,"—but, with all its briers and thorns, —*its* tears and trials,—it is *the* right way!

The result of such an habitual staying ourselves on the Lord, will be a deep, abiding *peace*;—any ripple will only be on the surface—no more. It is the *bosom* of the ocean alone, which the storm ruffles; all beneath is a serene, settled calm. So "Thou wilt keep him, O God, in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on *Thee!*"

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." I shall be content alike with what He appoints or withholds. I *can-*

not wrong that love with one shadow of suspicion! I have His own plighted promise of unchanging faithfulness, that "all things work together for good to them that love Him!" Often there are earthly sorrows hard to bear;—the unkind accusation, when it was least merited or expected;—the estrangement of tried and trusted friends, the failure of cherished hopes, favourite schemes broken up, plans of usefulness demolished, the gourd breeding its own worm and withering. "Commit thy cause and thy way to God!" We little know what tenderness there is in the blast of the rough wind; what "needs be" are folded under the wings of the storm! "All is well," because *all* is from *Him*. "Events are God's," says Rutherford; "let Him sit at His own helm, that moderateth all."

Christian! look back on your chequered path. How wondrously has He threaded you through the mazy way—

disappointing your fears, realizing your hopes! Are evils looming through the mists of the future? Do not anticipate the trials of to-morrow, to aggravate those of to-day. Leave the morrow with Him, who has promised, by "casting all your care on Him, to care for you." No affliction will be sent greater than you can bear. His voice will be heard stealing from the bosom of the threatening cloud, "Be still, and know that I am God!"

"*My Father!*" With such a word, you can stretch out your neck for any yoke; as with Israel of old, He will make those very waves that may now be so threatening, a fenced wall on every side! "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him." "In *all* thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths!"

"ARM YOURSELVES LIKEWISE WITH THE SAME MIND."

29TH MORNING

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

"That they all may be one."—JOHN xvii. 21.

Love of Unity. SURELY there is nothing for which Christian churches have such cause to hang their harps on the willows, as the extent to which the Shibboleth of party is heard in the camp of the faithful—sectarianism rearing its "untempered walls" within the Temple gates!

How different "the mind of Jesus!" Sent "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," He was never found disowning "*other* sheep not of that fold." "Them also will I bring," was an assertion continually illustrated by His deeds. Take one example; The woman of Samaria revealed what, alas! is too common in the world—a total absence of all real religion, along with an ardent zeal for her sect. She was living in open sin;

yet she was all alive to the nice distinction between a Jew and a Samaritan—between Mount Gerizim and Mount Zion ;—"How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, who am a woman of Samaria?" Did Jesus sanction or reciprocate her sectarianism?—did He leave her bigotry unrebuked? Hear His reply—"If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldst have asked of *Him*, and *He* would have given thee!" *He* would have allowed no such narrow-minded exclusiveness to have interfered with the interchange of kindly civilities with a stranger. Nay, He would have given thee better than all, the "living water" which "springeth up to everlasting life!"

How sad, that when the enemy is "coming in like a flood"—the ranks of Popery and infidelity linked in fatal and formidable confederacy—that the soldiers of Christ are forced to meet the

assault with standards soiled and mutilated by internal feuds! "Uniformity" there *may* not be, but "unity," in the true sense of the word, there *ought* to be. We may be clad in different livery, but let us stand side by side, and rank by rank, fighting the battles of our Lord. We may be different branches of the seven golden candlesticks, varying and diversified in outward form and workmanship; but let us combine in "shewing forth the praises of Him" who recognizes as the one true "churchmanship—fidelity in shining for His glory "as lights in the world." How can we read the 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians, and then think of our divisions? "How miserable," says Edward Bickersteth, "would an hospital be, if each patient were to be so offended with his neighbour's disease, as to differ with him on account of it, instead of trying to alleviate it!"

Ah! if we had more real communion

with our Saviour, should we not have more real communion with one another? If Christians would dip their arrows more in "the balm of Gilead," would there not be fewer wounds in the body of Christ? "How that word '*toleration*' is used amongst us!" said one who drank deeper than most, of his Master's spirit—"how we *tolerate* one another—Dissenters *tolerate* Churchmen, and Churchmen *tolerate* Dissenters! Oh! hateful word! TOLERATE one for whom *Jesus* died! *Tolerate* one whom He bears upon His heart! *Tolerate* a temple of the living God! Oh! there ought to be *that* in the word which should make us feel *ashamed* before God!"

"ARM YOURSELVES LIKEWISE WITH THE SAME MIND."

30TH MORNING.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"I am not of the world."—JOHN XVII. 14.

Not of the World.

IN one sense it was *not* so. Jesus did not seek to maintain His holiness intact and unspotted by avoiding contact with the world. He mingled familiarly in its busy crowds. He frowned on none of its innocent enjoyments; He fostered, by His example, no love of seclusion; He gave no warrant or encouragement to mortified pride, or disappointed hopes, to rush from its duties;—yet, with all this, what a halo of heavenliness encircled His pathway through it! "I am from above," was breathed in His every look, and word, and action, from the time when He lay in the slumbers of guileless infancy in His Bethlehem cradle, until He said, "I leave the world, and go to my Father!" He had moved

uncontaminated through its varied scenes, like the sunbeam, which, whatever it touches, remains as unsullied as when it issues from its great fountain.

But though Himself in His sinless nature "unconquerable" by temptation,—immutably secure from the world's malignant influences, it is all worthy of note, as an example to us, that He never unnecessarily braved these. He knew the seducing spell that same world would exercise on His people, of whom, with touching sympathy, He says, "*These* are in the world!" He knew the *many* who would be involved and ensnared in its subtle worship, who, "minding earthly things," would seek to slake their thirst at polluted streams!

Reader! the great problem you have to solve, Jesus has solved for you—to be "*in* the world, and yet not *of* it." To abandon it, would be a dereliction of duty. It would be servants deserting their work;—soldiers flying from the

battle-field. *Live* in it, that while you live, the world may feel the better for you. *Die*, that *when* you die, the world,—the *Church*,—may feel your loss, and cherish your example! On its cares and duties, its trusts and responsibilities, its employments and enjoyments, inscribe the motto, "The world passeth away!" Beware of everything in it that would tend to deaden spirituality of heart;—unfitting the mind for serious thought, lowering the standard of Christian duty, and inducing a perilous conformity to its false manners, habits, tastes, and principles. As the best antidote to the love of the world, let the inner *vacuum* of the heart be filled with the love of God. Seek to feel the nobility of your regenerated nature;—that you have a nobler heritage to care for than the transitory glories which encircle "an indivisible point, a fugitive atom." How can I mix with the potsherds of the earth? Once, "I

lay among the pots;" now, I am "like a dove, whose wings are covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold!" "Stranger;—pilgrim;—sojourner;"—"my *citizenship* is in heaven!" Why covet tinsel honours and glories? Why be solicitous about the smiles of that which knew not (nay, which frowned on) its Lord? "Paul calls it," says an old writer, "*schema* (a mathematical figure), which is a mere *notion*, and nothing in substance."—*(Thomas Brooks.)*

Live above its corroding cares and anxieties; remembering the description Jesus gives of His own true people, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world!"

"ARM YOURSELVES LIKEWISE WITH THE SAME MIND."

31st Morning.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit."—Luke xxiii. 46.

Calmness in Death.

In the death of Jesus there were elements of fearfulness, which the believer can know nothing of. It was with Him the execution of a penal sentence. The sins of an elect world were bearing Him down! The very voice of His God was heard giving the tremendous summons, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd!" Yet his was a death of *peace*, nay, of *triumph!* Ere He closed His eyes, light broke through the curtains of thick darkness. In the calm composure of filial confidence He breathed away His soul,—"Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit!" What was the secret of such tranquillity? This is His own key to it—"I have

glorified Thee on the earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."

Reader! will it be so with *you* at a dying hour? will *your* "work" be done? Have you already fled to Jesus? Are you reposing in him as your only Saviour, and following him as your only pattern? Then—let death overtake you when it may—you will have nothing to do *but to die!* The grave will be irradiated with His presence and smile. He will be standing there as He did by His own tomb of old, pointing to yours, tenanted with angel forms, nay, Himself as the "Precursor," shewing you "*the path of life!*" There can be no true peace till the fear of death be conquered by the sense of sin forgiven, through "the blood of the Cross." "Not till then," as one hath it, "will you be able to be a quiet spectator of the open grave at the bottom of the hill which you are soon to descend." "The sting of death is *sin*, but thanks be to God

who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!"

Seek now to live in the enjoyment of greater filial nearness to your covenant God; and thus, when the hour of departure *does* come, you will be able, without irreverence, to take the very words of your dying Lord, and make them your own—"FATHER, into Thy hands I commend my spirit." FATHER! It is going HOME!—The heart of the child leaping at the thought of the paternal roof, and the paternal welcome "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine!"

It is said of Archbishop Leighton, that he "was always happiest when, from the shaking of the prison doors, he was led to hope that some of those brisk blasts would throw them open, and give him the release he coveted! Christian! can you dread *that* which your Saviour has already vanquished! *Death!* It is as the angel to Peter, breaking the dun-

geon doors, and leading to open day ;—it is going to the world of your birthright, and leaving the one of your exile ;—"it is the soldier at nightfall lying down in his tent in peace, waiting the morning to receive his laurels." Oh! to be ever living in a state of holy preparation!—the mental eye gazing on the vista-view of an opening Heaven!—feeling that *every moment* is bringing us nearer and nearer that happy *Home!*—soon to be within reach of the Heavenly threshold, in sight of the Throne!—soon to be bending in adoring rapture with the Church triumphant—bathing in floods of infinite glory—"LIKE HIM,"—"seeing HIM *as he is*," and that *for Ever and Ever!*

"AND EVERY MAN THAT HATH THIS HOPE IN HIM PURIFIETH HIMSELF, EVEN AS HE IS PURE!"

"LEAVING US AN EXAMPLE, THAT YE SHOULD FOLLOW HIS STEPS."—1 PET. II. 21.

THE WORDS OF JESUS.

The Words of Jesus.

"A WORD spoken in season," says the wise man, "how good it is!" If this be true regarding the utterances of uninspired lips, with what devout and paramount interest must we invest the sayings of Incarnate Truth—"the WORDS OF JESUS!"

We have, in the motto-verses which head the succeeding pages, a few comforting responses from the Oracle of heavenly Wisdom—a few grapes plucked from the True Vine—living streams welling fresh from the Living Fountain. Every portion of Scripture is designed for nutriment to the soul—"the bread of Life;" but surely we may well regard the recorded "*Words of Jesus*" as "the finest of the wheat." These are the "Honey" out of the true "Rock," with which He will "satisfy" us. The WORDS that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.

The following are selected more especially as "*Words for the Weary*"—healing leaves for the wounded spirit, falling from the Tree of Life Jesus was divinely qualified for the special office of speaking "many and *comfortable* words." "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I might know how to speak a *Word in Season* to him that is *weary*."

Let us, like the disciple of Patmos, turn to hear the voice that speaks to us, saying, "I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in *His Word* do I hope." Eighteen hundred years have elapsed since these "words" were uttered. With tones of unaltered and unchanged affection, they are still echoed from the inner sanctuary—they come this day fresh as they were spoken, from the lips of Him whose memorial to all time is this: "*that same Jesus.*"

Reader! seek to realise, in meditating on them, the simple but solemn truth—"*Christ speaks to me!*" surely nothing can be more soothing with which to close your eyes on your nightly pillow, than—"A WORD OF JESUS."

1st Evening of Month.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said"—

"Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."—Matt. xi. 28.

The Gracious Invitation.

Gracious "word" of a gracious Saviour, on which the soul may confidingly repose and be at peace for ever! It is a *present* rest—the rest of *grace* as well as the rest of *glory*. Not only are there signals of peace hung out from the walls of heaven—the lights of Home glimmering in the distance to cheer our footsteps; but we have the "shadow" of this "great Rock" in a *present* "weary land." Before the Throne alone is there "the sea of glass," without one rippling wave; but there is a haven even on earth for the tempest-tossed—"We which have believed do enter into rest."

Reader! hast thou found this blessed

repose in the blood and work of Immanuel? Long going about "seeking rest and finding none," does this "word" sound like music in thine ears—"*Come unto Me*"? All other peace is counterfeit, shadowy, unreal. The eagle spurns the gilded cage as a poor equivalent for his free-born soarings. The soul's immortal aspirations can be satisfied with nothing short of the possession of God's favour and love in Jesus.

How unqualified is the invitation! If there had been one condition on entering this covenant Ark, we must have been through eternity at the mercy of the storm. But all are alike warranted and welcome, and none *more* warranted than welcome. For the weak, the weary, the sin-burdened and sorrow-burdened, there is an open door of grace.

Return, then, unto thy rest, O my soul! Let the sweet cadence of this "word of Jesus" steal on thee amid the

disquietudes of earth. Sheltered in Him, thou art safe for time, safe for eternity! There may be, and *will* be temporary tossings, fears, and misgivings,—manifestations of inward corruption; but these will only be like the surface heavings of the ocean, while underneath there is a deep, settled calm. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace" (*lit.* peace, peace) "whose mind is stayed on Thee." In the world it is care on care, trouble on trouble, sin on sin; but every wave that breaks on the believer's soul seems sweetly to murmur "Peace, peace!"

And if the foretaste of this rest be precious, what must be the glorious consummation? Awaking in the morning of immortality, with the unquiet dream of earth over—faith lost in sight and hope in fruition;—no more any bias to sin—no more latent principles of evil—nothing to disturb the spirit's deep everlasting tranquillity—the trembling

magnet of the heart, reposing where alone it can confidingly and permanently rest in the enjoyment of the Infinite God.

"THESE THINGS HAVE I SPOKEN UNTO YOU, THAT IN ME YE MIGHT HAVE PEACE."

2D EVENING.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said"—

"Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things."—Matt. vi. 32.

The Comforting Assurance.

THOUGH spoken originally by Jesus regarding temporal things, this may be taken as a motto for the child of God amid all the changing vicissitudes of his changing history. How it should lull all misgivings; silence all murmurings; lead to lowly, unquestioning submissiveness — "My Heavenly Father knoweth that I have need of all these things."

Where can a child be safer or better than in a father's hand? Where can the believer be better than in the hands of his God? We are poor judges of what is best. We are under safe guidance with infallible wisdom. If we are tempted in a moment of rash presumption to say, 'All these things are against

me," let this "word" rebuke the hasty and unworthy surmise. Unerring wisdom and Fatherly love have pronounced *all* to be "needful."

My soul, is there aught that is disturbing thy peace? Are providences dark, or crosses heavy? Are spiritual props removed, creature comforts curtailed, gourds smitten and withered like grass?—write on each, "*Your Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.*" It was He who increased thy burden. Why? "*It was needed.*" It was He who smote down thy clay idol. Why? "*It was needed.*" It was supplanting Himself; He had to remove it! It was He who crossed thy worldly schemes, marred thy cherished hopes. Why? "*It was needed.*" There was a lurking thorn in the coveted path. There was some higher spiritual blessing in reversion. "He *prevented*' thee with the blessings of His goodness."

Seek to cherish a spirit of more child-like confidence in thy Heavenly Father's will. Thou art not left unbefriended and alone to buffet the storms of the wilderness. Thy Marahs as well as thy Elims are appointed by Him. A gracious pillar-cloud is before thee. Follow it through sunshine and storm. He may "lead thee about," but He will not lead thee wrong. Unutterable tenderness is the characteristic of all His dealings. "Blessed be His name," says a tried believer, "He maketh my feet like hinds' feet" (*literally*, "equalleth" them), "he *equalleth* them for every precipice, every ascent, every leap."

And who is it that speaks this quieting word? It is He who Himself felt the preciousness of the assurance during His own awful sufferings, that all were *needed*, and all *appointed*; that from Bethlehem's cradle to Calvary's Cross there was not the redundant thorn in the chaplet of sorrow which He,

the Man of Sorrows, bore. Every drop in His bitter cup was mingled by His Father: "This cup which *Thou* givest me to drink, shall I not drink it?" Oh, if He could extract comfort in this hour of inconceivable agony, in the thought that a Father's hand lighted the fearful furnace-fires, what strong consolation is there in the same truth to all His suffering people!

What! one superfluous drop! one redundant pang! one unneeded cross! Hush the secret atheism! He gave His Son for thee! He calls Himself "thy Father!" Whatever be the trial under which thou art now smarting, let the word of a gracious Saviour be "like oil thrown on the fretful sea;" let it dry every rebellious tear-drop. "He, thine unerring Parent, knoweth that thou hast need of *this* as well as *all* these things."

"THY WORD IS VERY SURE, THEREFORE THY SERVANT LOVETH IT."

3D EVEN

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said"—

"Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son."—John xiv. 13.

The Power of Prayer.

BLESSED JESUS! it is Thou who hast unlocked to Thy people the gates of prayer. Without Thee they must have been shut forever. It was Thy atoning merit on earth that first opened them; it is Thy intercessory work in heaven that keeps them open still.

How unlimited the promise—"*Whatsoever ye shall ask!*" It is the pledge of all that the needy sinner requires—all that an Omnipotent Saviour can bestow! As the great Steward of the mysteries of grace, He seems to say to His faithful servants, "Take thy bill, and under this my superscription, write what you please." And then, when the blank is filled up, he further endorses

each petition with the words, "*I* WILL *do it!*"

He farther encourages us to ask "*in His name.*" In the case of an earthly petitioner there are some pleas more influential in obtaining a boon than others. Jesus spake of *this* as forming the key to the heart of God. As David loved the helpless cripple of Saul's house "*for Jonathan's sake,*" so will the Father, by virtue of our covenant relationship to the true JONATHAN (*lit.*, "the gift of God"), delight in giving us even "exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think."

Reader! do you know the blessedness of confiding your every want and every care—your every sorrow and every cross—into the ear of the Saviour? He is the "Wonderful Counsellor." With an exquisitely tender sympathy He can enter into the innermost depths of your need. That need may be great, but the everlasting arms are underneath it all.

Think of Him now, at this moment—the great Angel of the Covenant, with the censer full of much incense, in which are placed your feeblest aspirations, your most burdened sighs—the odour-breathing cloud ascending with acceptance before the Father's throne. The answer may tarry; these your supplications may seem to be kept long on the wing, hovering around the mercy-seat. A gracious God sometimes sees it meet thus to test the faith and patience of His people. He delights to hear the music of their importunate pleadings—to see them undeterred by difficulties—unrepelled by apparent forgetfulness and neglect. But He *will* come at last;—the pent-up fountain of love and mercy will at length burst out;—the soothing accents will in His own good time be heard, "Be it unto thee according to thy word!"

Soldier of Christ! with all thine other panoply, forget not the "*All-prayer*."

It is that which keeps bright and shining "the whole armour of God." While yet out in the night of a dark world—whilst still bivouacking in an enemy's country—kindle thy watch-fires at the altar of incense. Thou must be Moses, pleading on the mount, if thou wouldst be Joshua, victorious in the world's daily battle. Confide thy cause to this waiting Redeemer. Thou canst not weary Him with thine importunity. He delights in hearing. His Father is glorified in giving. The memorable Bethany-utterance remains unaltered and unrepealed—"I knew that Thou hearest me always." He is still the "Prince that has power with God and prevails"—still He promises and pleads—still He lives and loves!

"I WAIT FOR THE LORD, MY SOUL DOTH WAIT, AND IN HIS WORD DO I HOPE."

4TH EVENING

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said"—

"What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter."—John xiii. 7.

The Unveiled Dealings.

O BLESSED day, when the long sealed book of mystery shall be unfolded, when the "fountains of the great deep shall be broken up," "the channels of the water seen," and *all* discovered to be one vast revelation of unerring wisdom and ineffable love! Here we are often baffled at the Lord's dispensations; we cannot fathom his ways:—like the well of Sychar, they are deep, and we have nothing to draw with. But soon the "mystery of God will be finished;" the enigmatical "seals," with all their inner meanings, opened. When that "morning without clouds" shall break, each soul will be like the angel standing in the sun—there will be no shadow; all will be perfect day!

Believer, be still! The dealings of thy Heavenly Father may seem dark to thee; there may seem now to be no golden fringe, no "bright light in the clouds;" but a day of disclosures is at hand. "Take it on trust a little while." An earthly child takes *on trust* what his father tells him: when he reaches maturity, much that was baffling to his infant comprehension is explained. Thou art in this world in the nonage of thy being—Eternity is the soul's immortal manhood. *There* every dealing will be vindicated. It will lose all its "darkness" when bathed in the floods "of the excellent glory!"

Ah! instead of thus being as weaned children, how apt are we to exercise ourselves in matters too high for us! not content with knowing that our father *wills* it, but presumptuously seeking to know *how* it is, and *why* it is. If it be unfair to pronounce on the unfinished

and incompleted works of man; if the painter, or sculptor, or artificer, would shrink from having his labours judged of when in a rough, unpolished, immatured state; how much more so with the works of God! How we should honour Him by a simple, confiding, unreserved submission to His will,—contented patiently to wait the fulfilment of this "*hereafter*" promise, when all the lights and shadows in the now half-finished picture will be blended and melted into one harmonious whole,—when all the now disjointed stones in the temple will be seen to fit into their appointed place, giving unity, and compactness, and symmetry, to all the building.

And who is it that speaks these living "words," "What *I* do?" It it He who died for us! who now lives for us! Blessed Jesus! Thou mayest *do* much that our blind hearts would like *un*done,—"terrible things in righteousness

which we looked not for." The heaviest (what we may be tempted to call the severest) cross Thou canst lay upon us we shall regard as only the *apparent* severity of unutterable and unalterable love. Eternity will unfold how *all*, *all* was needed; that nothing else, nothing *less*, could have done! If not now, at least then, the deliberate verdict on a calm retrospect of life will be this,—

"THE WORD OF THE LORD IS RIGHT, AND ALL HIS WORKS ARE DONE IN TRUTH."

5TH EVENING.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said"—

"Herein is my Father glorified, that *ye bear much fruit.*" —John xv. 8.

The Father Glorified.

WHEN surveying the boundless ocean of covenant mercy —every wave chiming, "God is Love!" does the thought never present itself, "What can I do for this great Being who hath done so much for me?" Recompense, I cannot! No more can my purest services add one iota to His underived glory, than the tiny taper can add to the blaze of the sun at noonday, or a drop of water to the boundless ocean. Yet, wondrous thought! from this worthless soul of mine there may roll in a revenue of glory which He who loves the broken and contrite spirit will "not despise." "*Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit.*"

Reader! are you a fruit-bearer in your Lord's vineyard? Are you seeking to make life one grand act of consecration to His glory—one thank-offering for His unmerited love? You may be unable to exhibit much fruit in the eye of the world. Your circumstances and position in life may forbid you to point to any splendid services, or laborious and imposing efforts in the cause of God. It matters not. It is often those fruits that are unseen and unknown to man, ripening in seclusion, that He values most;—the quiet, lowly walk—patience and submission—gentleness and humility—putting yourself unreservedly in His hands—willing to be led by Him even in darkness—saying. Not *my* will, but *Thy* will:—the unselfish spirit, the meek bearing of an injury, the unostentatious kindness,—these are some of the "fruits" which your Heavenly Father loves, and by which He is glorified.

Perchance it may be with you the season of trial, the chamber of protracted sickness, the time of desolating bereavement, some furnace seven times heated. Herein, too, you may sweetly glorify your God. Never is your Heavenly Father *more* glorified by His children on earth, than when, in the midst of these furnace-fires, He listens to nothing but the gentle breathings of confiding faith and love—"Let Him do what seemeth good unto Him." Yes, you can there glorify Him in a way which angels cannot do in a world where no trial is. They can glorify God only with the *crown;* you can glorify Him with the *cross* and the prospect of the *crown* together! Ah, if He be dealing severely with you—if He, as the Great Husbandman, be pruning His vines, lopping their boughs, stripping off their luxuriant branches and "beautiful rods!"—remember the end! —"He purgeth it, that it may bring

forth *more* fruit," and "*Herein* is my Father glorified!"

Be it yours to lie passive in His hands, saying in unmurmuring resignation, Father, glorify Thy name! Glorify Thyself, whether by giving or taking, filling my cup or "emptying me from vessel to vessel!" Let me know no will but Thine. Angels possess no higher honour and privilege than glorifying the God before whom they cast their crowns. How blessed to be able thus to claim brotherhood with the spirits in the upper sanctuary! nay more, to be associated with the Saviour Himself in the theme of His own exalted joy, when he said, "*I* have *glorified* Thee on earth!"

"THESE THINGS HAVE I SPOKEN UNTO YOU, THAT MY JOY MIGHT REMAIN IN YOU, AND THAT YOUR JOY MIGHT BE FULL."

6TH EVENING.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said"—

"The very hairs of your head are all numbered."—Matt. x. 30.

The Tender Solicitude.

WHAT a "word" is this! All that befalls you, to the very numbering of your hairs, is known to God! Nothing can happen by accident or chance. Nothing can elude His inspection. The fall of the forest leaf—the fluttering of the insect—the waving of the angel's wing—the annihilation of a world,—all are equally noted by Him. Man speaks of great things and small things—God knows no such distinction.

How especially comforting to think of this tender solicitude with reference to His own covenant people—that He metes out their joys and their sorrows! Every sweet, every bitter, is ordained by Him. Even "*wearisome* nights" are "*appointed.*" Not a pang I feel,

not a tear I shed, but is known to Him. What are called "dark dealings" are the ordinations of undeviating faithfulness. Man *may* err—his ways are often crooked; "but as for God, *His* way is perfect!" He puts my tears into His bottle. Every moment the everlasting arms are underneath and around me. He keeps me "as the apple of His eye." He "bears" me "as a man beareth his own son!"

Do I look to the future? Is there much of uncertainty and mystery hanging over it? It may be, much premonitory of evil. Trust Him. All is marked out for me. Dangers will be averted; bewildering mazes will shew themselves to be interlaced and interweaved with mercy. "He keepeth the feet of His saints." A hair of their head will not be touched. He leads sometimes darkly, sometimes sorrowfully; most frequently by cross and circuitous ways we ourselves would not

have chosen; but *always* wisely, *always* tenderly. With all its mazy windings and turnings, its roughness and ruggedness, the believer's is not only *a* right way, but THE right way—the best which covenant love and wisdom could select. "Nothing," says Jeremy Taylor, "does so establish the mind amidst the rollings and turbulence of present things, as both a look above them and a look beyond them; above them, to the steady and good hand by which they are ruled; and beyond them, to the sweet and beautiful end to which, by that hand, they will be brought." "The great Counsellor," says Thomas Brooks, "puts clouds and darkness round about Him, bidding us follow at His beck through the cloud, promising an eternal and uninterrupted sunshine on the other side." On that "other side" we shall see how every apparent rough blast has been hastening our barks nearer the desired haven!

Well may I commit the keeping of my soul to Jesus in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator. He gave *Himself* for me. This transcendent pledge of love is the guarantee for the bestowment of every other needed blessing. Oh, blessed thought! my sorrows numbered by the Man of Sorrows; my tears counted by Him who shed first His tears and then His blood for *me*. He will impose no needless burden, and exact no unnecessary sacrifice. There was no redundant drop in the cup of His own sufferings; neither will there be in that of His people. "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

"WHEREFORE COMFORT ONE ANOTHER WITH THESE WORDS."

7TH EVENING.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said"—

"I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine."—John x. 14.

The Good Shepherd.

"THE Good Shepherd"—well can the sheep who know his voice attest the truthfulness and faithfulness of this endearing name and word. Where would they have been through eternity, had He not left his throne of light and glory, travelling down to this dark valley of the curse, and giving his life a ransom for many? Think of His love to each separate member of the flock—wandering over pathless wilds with unwearied patience and unquenchable ardour, ceasing not the pursuit *until* He finds it. Think of His love *now*—"I AM the Good Shepherd." Still that tender eye of watchfulness following the guilty wanderers—the glories of heaven

and the songs of angels unable to dim or alter his affection ;—the music of the words, at this moment coming as sweetly from His lips as when first He uttered them — "I know my sheep." Every individual believer—the weakest, the weariest, the faintest — claims His attention. His loving eye follows me day by day out to the wilderness—marks out my pasture, studies my wants, and trials, and sorrows, and perplexities —every steep ascent, every brook, every winding path, every thorny thicket. "He goeth before them." It is not rough driving, but gentle guiding. He does not take them over an unknown road ; He himself has trodden it before. He hath drunk of every "brook by the way ;" He himself hath "suffered being tempted ;" He is "able to succour them that are tempted." He seems to say, "Fear not ; I cannot lead you wrong ; follow me in the bleak waste, the blackened wilderness, as well as by

the green pastures and the still waters. Do you ask why I have left the sunny side of the valley—carpeted with flowers, and bathed in sunshine—leading you to some high mountain apart, some cheerless spot of sorrow? Trust me, I will lead you by paths you have not known, but they are all known *to* me, and selected *by* me—'follow thou me.'"

"And am known of mine!" Reader! canst thou subscribe to these closing words of this gracious utterance? Dost thou "know" *Him* in all the glories of His person, in all the completeness of His finished work, in all the tenderness and unutterable love of His every dealing towards thee?

It has been remarked by Palestine travellers, that not only do the sheep there follow the guiding shepherd, but even while cropping the herbage as they go along, they look wistfully up to see that they are near him. Is this thine attitude—*looking unto Jesus*"?

"In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct thy paths." Leave the future to His providing. "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want." *I shall not want!*—it has been beautifully called "the bleating of Messiah's sheep." Take it as thy watchword during thy wilderness wanderings, till grace be perfected in glory. Let this be the record of thy simple faith and unwavering trust, "These are they who *follow*, whithersoever He sees meet to guide them."

"THE SHEEP FOLLOW HIM, FOR THEY KNOW HIS VOICE."

8TH EVENING.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said"—

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever."—John XIV. 16.

The Abiding Comforter.

WHEN one beloved earthly friend is taken away, how the heart is drawn out towards those that remain! Jesus was now about to leave His sorrowing disciples. He directs them to one whose presence would fill up the vast blank His own absence was to make. His name was, *The Comforter;* His mission was, "to abide with them for ever." Accordingly, no sooner had the gates of heaven closed on their ascended Lord, than, in fulfilment of His own gracious promise, the bereaved and orphaned Church was baptized with Pentecostal fire. "When I depart, I will send Him unto you."

Reader! do you realize your privilege

—living under the dispensation of the Spirit? Is it your daily prayer that He may come down in all the plenitude of His heavenly graces on your soul, even "as rain upon the mown grass and showers that water the earth?" You cannot live without Him; there can be not one heavenly aspiration, not one breathing of love, not one upward glance of faith, without His gracious influences. Apart from Him, there is no preciousness in the Word, no blessing in ordinances, no permanent sanctifying results in affliction. As the angel directed Hagar to the hidden spring, this blessed agent, true to His name and office, directs His people to the waters of comfort, giving new glory to the promises, investing the Saviour's character and work with new loveliness and beauty.

How precious is the title which this "Word of Jesus" gives Him—THE COMFORTER! What a word for a sor-

rowing world! The Church militant has its tent pitched in a "valley of *tears.*" The name of the divine visitant who comes to her and ministers to her wants, is—*Comforter.* Wide is the family of the afflicted, but He has a healing balm for all—the weak, the tempted, the sick, the sorrowing, the bereaved, the dying! How different from other "sons of consolation!" *Human friends*—a look may alienate; adversity may estrange; death must separate! The "Word of Jesus" speaks of One whose attribute and prerogative is to "abide with for ever;" superior to all vicissitudes—surviving death itself!

And surely if anything else can endear His mission of love to His Church, it is that He comes direct from God, as the fruit and gift of *Jesus' intercession*—"*I* will pray the Father." This holy dove of peace and comfort is let out by the hand of Jesus from the ark of covenant

mercy within the veil! Nor is the gift more glorious than it is free. Does the word—the look, of a suffering child get the eye and the heart of an *earthly* father? "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit unto them that ask Him?" It is He who makes these "words of Jesus" "winged words."

"HE SHALL BRING ALL THINGS TO YOUR REMEMBRANCE, WHATSOEVER I HAVE SAID UNTO YOU."

9TH EVENING

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said"—

'Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more."—John viii. 11.

The Gracious Verdict.

How much more tender is Jesus than the tenderest of earthly friends! The apostles, in a moment of irritation, would have called down fire from heaven on obstinate sinners. Their Master rebuked the unkind suggestion. Peter, the trusted but treacherous disciple, expected nothing but harsh and merited reproof for faithlessness. He who knew well how that heart would be bowed with penitential sorrow, sends first the kindest of messages, and then the gentlest of rebukes, "Lovest thou me?" The watchmen in the Canticles smote the bride, tore off her veil, and loaded her with reproaches. When she found her lost Lord, there was not one

word of upbraiding! "So slow is He to anger," says an illustrious believer, "so ready to forgive, that when His prophets lost all patience with the people so as to make intercession *against* them, yet even then could He not be got to cast off this people whom He foreknew, for His great name's sake."

The guilty sinner to whom He speaks this comforting "word," was frowned upon by her accusers. But, if others spurned her from their presence, "*Neither do I condemn thee.*" Well it is to fall into the hands of this blessed Saviour-God, for great are His mercies.

Are we to infer from this that He winks at sin? Far from it. His blood, His work—Bethlehem, and Calvary, refute the thought! Ere the guilt even of one solitary soul could be washed out, He had to descend from His everlasting throne to agonise on the accursed tree. But this "word of Jesus" is a word of tender encouragement to every

sincere, broken-hearted penitent, that crimson sins, and scarlet sins, are no barriers to a free, full, everlasting forgiveness. The Israelite of old, gasping in his agony in the sands of the wilderness, had but to "*look* and *live;*" and still does He say, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." Upreared by the side of His own cross there was a monumental column for all Time, only second to itself in wonder. Over the head of the dying felon is the superscription written for despairing guilt and trembling penitence, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." "He never yet," says Charnock, "put out a dim candle that was lighted at the Sun of Righteousness." "Whatever our guiltiness be," says Rutherford, "yet when it falleth into the sea of God's mercy it is but like a drop of blood fallen into the great ocean."

Reader! you may be the chief of sinners, or it may be the chief of backsliders; your soul may have started aside like a broken bow. As the bankrupt is afraid to look into his books, you may be afraid to look into your own heart. You are hovering on the verge of despair. Conscience, and the memory of unnumbered sins, is uttering the desponding verdict, "I condemn thee." Jesus has a kinder word—a more cheering declaration—"*I* condemn thee *not:* go and sin no more!"

"AND ALL WONDERED AT THE GRACIOUS WORDS THAT PROCEEDED OUT OF HIS MOUTH."

10TH EVENING.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said"—

"Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother."—Mark iii. 35.

The Wondrous Relationship.

As if no solitary earthly type were enough to image forth the love of Jesus, He assembles into one verse a group of the tenderest earthly relationships. Human affection has to focus its loveliest hues, but all is too little to afford an exponent of the depth and intensity of *His*. "As one whom his *mother* comforteth;" "my *sister*, my *spouse*." He is "*Son*," "*Brother*," "*Friend*"—all in one; "cleaving closer than any brother."

And can we wonder at such language? Is it merely figurative, expressive of more than the reality?—He gave *Himself* for us; after that pledge of His affection we must cease to mar-

vel at any expression of the interest He feels in us. Anything He can *say* or *do* is infinitely less than what He *has done.*

Believer! art thou solitary and desolate? Has bereavement severed earthly ties? Has the grave made forced estrangements,—sundered the closest links of earthly affection? In Jesus thou hast filial and fraternal love combined; He is the Friend of friends, whose presence and fellowship compensates for all losses, and supplies all blanks; "He setteth the solitary in families." If thou art orphaned, friendless, comfortless here, remember there is in the Elder Brother on the Throne a love deep as the unfathomed ocean, boundless as Eternity!

And who are those who can claim the blessedness spoken of under this wondrous imagery? On whom does He lavish this unutterable affection? No outward profession will purchase it. No church, no priest, no ordinances, no

denominational distinctions. It is on those who are possessed of *holy characters*. "He that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven!" He who reflects the mind of Jesus; imbibes His Spirit; takes His Word as the regulator of his daily walk, and makes His glory the great end of his being; he who lives *to* God, and *with* God, and *for* God; the humble, lowly, Christ-like, Heaven-seeking Christian;—he it is who can claim as his own this wondrous heritage of love! If it be a worthy object of ambition to be loved by the good and the great on earth, what must it be to have an eye of love ever beaming upon us from the Throne, in comparison of which the attachment here of brother, sister, kinsman, friend—all combined—pales like the stars before the rising sun! Though we are often ashamed to call Him "Brother," "He is not ashamed to call us *brethren*." He looks down on poor worms, and says,

"*The same* is my mother, and sister, and brother!" "I will write upon them," He says in another place, "my new name." Just as we write our name on a book to tell that it belongs to us; so Jesus would write His own name on *us*, the wondrous volumes of His grace, that they may be read and pondered by principalities and powers.

Have we "known and believed this love of God"? Ah, how poor has been the requital! Who cannot subscribe to the words of one, whose name was in all the churches,—"Thy love has been as a shower; the return but a dew-drop, and that dew-drop stained with sin."

"IF A MAN LOVE ME, HE WILL KEEP MY WORDS; AND MY FATHER WILL LOVE HIM AND WE WILL COME UNTO HIM, AND MAKE OUR ABODE WITH HIM."

11TH EVENING.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said"—

"I will not leave you comfortless: I will como to you."
—John xiv. 18.

The Befriended Orphans.

DOES the Christian's path lie all the way through Beulah? Nay, he is forewarned it is to be one of "much tribulation." He has his Marahs as well as his Elims—his valleys of Baca as well as his grapes of Eshcol. Often is he left unbefriended to bear the brunt of the storm—his gourds fading when most needed—his sun going down while it is yet day—his happy home and happy heart darkened in a moment with sorrows with which a stranger (with which often a *brother*) cannot intermeddle. There is *One* Brother "born for adversity" who *can*. How often has that voice broken with its silvery accents the muffled stillness of

the sick-chamber or death-chamber! "'*I* will not leave you comfortless;' the world *may*, friends *may*, the desolations of bereavement and death *may;* but *I will not;* you will be alone, yet *not* alone, for I your Saviour and your God will be with you!"

Jesus seems to have an especial love and affection for His orphaned and comfortless people. A father loves his sick and sorrowing child most; of all his household, he occupies most of his thoughts. Christ seems to delight to lavish His deepest sympathy on "him that hath no helper." It is in the hour of sorrow His people have found Him most precious; it is in "the wilderness" He speaks most "comfortably unto them;" He gives them "their vineyards from thence:" in the places they least expected, wells of heavenly consolation break forth at their feet. As Jonathan of old, when faint and weary, had his strength revived by the honey he found

dropping in the tangled thicket; so the faint and woe-worn children of God find "honey in the wood"—everlasting consolation dropping from the tree of life, in the midst of the thorniest thickets of affliction.

Comfortless ones, be comforted! Jesus often makes you *portionless* here, to drive you to Himself, the *everlasting portion*. He often dries every rill and fountain of earthly bliss, that He may lead you to say, "All my springs are in thee." "He seems intent," says one who could speak from experience, "to fill up every gap love has been forced to make; one of his errands from heaven was to bind up the broken-hearted." How beautifully in one amazing verse does He conjoin the depth and tenderness of His comfort with the certainty of it,—"As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you, and ye SHALL be comforted!"

Ah, how many would not have their

wilderness-state altered, with all its trials, and gloom, and sorrow, just that they might enjoy the unutterable sympathy and love of this Comforter of the comfortless, one ray of whose approving smile can dispel the deepest earthly gloom! As the clustering constellations shine with intensest lustre in the midnight sky, so these "words of Jesus" come out like ministering angels in the deep dark night of earthly sorrow. We may see no beauty in them when the world is sunny and bright; but He has laid them up in store for us for the dark and cloudy day.

"THESE THINGS HAVE I TOLD YOU, THAT WHEN THE TIME COMETH, YE MAY REMEMBER THAT I TOLD YOU OF THEM."

12TH EVENING

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said"—

"In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."—John xvi. 33.

The World Conquered.

AND shall I be afraid of a world already conquered? The Almighty Victor, within view of His crown, turns round to His faint and weary soldiers, and bids them take courage. They are not fighting their way through untried enemies. The God-Man Mediator "*knows* their sorrows." "He was in *all points* tempted." "Both He (*i. e.*, Christ) who sanctifieth, and they (His people) who are sanctified, are all of one (nature.)" As the great Precursor, he heads the pilgrim band, saying, "I will shew you the path of life." The way to heaven is consecrated by His footprints. Every thorn that wounds *them*, has wounded *Him* before. Every cross they can

bear, He has borne before. Every tear they shed, He has shed before. There is one respect, indeed, in which the identity fails,—He was "yet without sin;" but this recoil of His holy nature from moral evil, gives him a deeper and intenser sensibility towards those who have still corruption within responding to temptation without.

Reader! Are you ready to faint under your tribulations? Is it a seducing world—a wandering, wayward heart? "Consider *Him* that endured!" Listen to your adorable Redeemer, stooping from His throne, and saying, "*I* have overcome the world." He came forth unscathed from its snares. With the same heavenly weapon He bids you wield, three times did He repel the Tempter, saying, "It is written."—Is it some crushing trial or overwhelming grief? He is "*acquainted* with *grief*." He, the mighty Vine, knows the minutest

fibres of sorrow in the branches; when the pruning-knife touches *them* it touches *Him*. "He has gone," says a tried sufferer, "through every class in our wilderness-school." He loves to bring His people into untried and perplexing places, that they may seek out the guiding pillar, and prize its radiance. He puts them on the darkening waves, that they may follow the guiding light hung out astern from the only bark of pure and unsullied Humanity that was ever proof against the storm.

Be assured there is disguised love in all He does. He who knows us infinitely better than we know ourselves, often puts a thorn in our nest to drive us to the wing, that we may not be grovellers for ever. "It is," says Evans, "upon the smooth ice we slip; the rough path is safest for the feet." The tearless and undimmed eye is not to be coveted *here; that* is reserved for heaven!

Who can tell what muffled and disguised "needs be" there may lurk under these world-tribulations? His true spiritual seed are often planted deep in the soil; they have to make their way through a load of sorrow before they reach the surface; but their roots are thereby the firmer and deeper struck. Had it not been for these lowly and needed "depths," they might have rushed up as feeble saplings, and succumbed to the first blast. He often leads His people still, as He led them of old, to "a high mountain apart;" but it is to a *high* mountain—*above the world;* and, better still, He who Himself hath overcome the world, leadeth them there, and speaketh comfortably unto them.

"I HOPE IN THY WORD."

13TH EVENING.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said"—

"Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."—Luke xii. 32.

The Little Flock.

THE music of the Shepherd's voice again! Another comforting "word," and how tender! *His* flock, a *little* flock, a *feeble* flock, a *fearful* flock, but a *beloved* flock, loved of the Father, enjoying His "good pleasure," and soon to be a *glorified* flock, safe in the fold, secure within the kingdom! How does He quiet their fears and misgivings? As they stand panting on the bleak mountain side, He points His crook upwards to the bright and shining gates of glory, and says, "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you these!" What gentle words! what a blessed consummation! Gracious Saviour, Thy *gentleness* hath made me *great!*

That kingdom is the believer's by irreversible and inalienable charter-right —"I appoint unto you" (by covenant), says Jesus in another place, "a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me." It is as sure as everlasting love and almighty power can make it. Satan, the great foe of the kingdom, may be injecting foul misgivings, and doubts, and fears as to your security; but he cannot denude you of your purchased immunities. He must first pluck the crown from the Brow upon the Throne, before he can weaken or impair this sure word of promise. If "it pleased the Lord" to *bruise* the Shepherd, it will surely please Him to make happy the purchased flock. If He "smote" His "Fellow" when the sheep were scattered, surely it will rejoice Him, for the Shepherd's sake, "to turn His hand upon the little ones."

Believers, think of this! "It is your Father's good pleasure." The Good

Shepherd, in leading you across the intervening mountains, shews you signals and memorials of paternal grace studding all the way. He may "lead you about" in your way thither. He led the children of Israel of old out of Egypt to their promised kingdom,—how? By forty years' wilderness-discipline and privations. But trust Him; dishonour Him not with guilty doubts and fears. Look not back on your dark, stumbling paths, nor within on your fitful and vacillating heart; but forwards to the land that is far off. How earnestly God desires your salvation! What a heaping together of similar tender "words" with that which is here addressed to us! The Gospel seems like a palace full of opened windows, from each of which He issues an invitation, declaring that He has no pleasure in our death—but rather that we would turn and live!

Let the melody of the Shepherd's

reed fall gently on your ear,—"It is your Father's good pleasure." I have given you, He seems to say, the best proof that it is *mine*. In order to purchase that kingdom, I died for you! But it is also *His*: "As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered, so," says God, "will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day." Fear not, then, little flock! though yours for a while should be the bleak mountain and sterile waste, seeking your way Zionward, it may be "with torn fleeces and bleeding feet;" for,

"IT IS NOT THE WILL OF YOUR FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN, THAT ONE OF THESE LITTLE ONES SHOULD PERISH."

14TH EVENING.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said"—

"If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink."—John vii. 37.

The Unlimited Offer.

ONE of the most gracious "words" that ever "proceeded out of the mouth of God!" The time it was uttered was an impressive one; it was on "the last, the great day" of the Feast of Tabernacles, when a denser multitude than on any of the seven preceding ones were assembled together. The golden bowl, according to custom, had probably just been filled with the waters of Siloam, and was being carried up to the Temple amid the acclamations of the crowd, when the Saviour of the world seized the opportunity of speaking to them some truths of momentous import. Many, doubtless, were the "words of Jesus" uttered on the previous days, but

the most important is reserved for the last. What, then, is the great closing theme on which He rivets the attention of this vast auditory, and which He would have them carry away to their distant homes? It is, *The freeness of His own great Salvation*—"If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink"

Reader! do you discredit the reality of this gracious offer? Are your legion sins standing as a barrier between you and a Saviour's proffered mercy? Do you feel as if you cannot come "just as you are;" that some partial cleansing, some preparatory reformation must take place before you can venture to the living fountain? Nay, "*If any man.*" What is freer than water?—The poorest beggar may drink "without money" the wayside pool. *That* is your Lord's own picture of His own glorious salvation; you are invited to come, "without one plea," in all your poverty and want, your weakness and unworthiness. Re-

member the Redeemer's saying to the woman of Samaria. She was the chief of sinners—profligate—hardened—degraded; but He made no condition, no qualification; *simple believing* was all that was required,—"If thou knewest the gift of God," thou wouldst have asked, and He would have given thee "living water."

But is there not, after all, *one* condition mentioned in this "word of Jesus?"—"*If* any man *thirst*." You may have the depressing consciousness that you experience no such ardent longings after holiness,—no feeling of your affecting need of the Saviour. But is not this very conviction of your want an indication of a feeble longing after Christ? If you are saying, "I have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep," He who makes offer of the salvation-stream will Himself fill your empty vessel,—"He satisfieth the *longing* soul with goodness."

"Jesus *stood* and *cried*." It is the solitary instance recorded of Him of whom it is said, "He shall *not* strive nor cry," lifting up "His voice in the streets." But it was truth of surpassing interest and magnitude He had to proclaim. It was a declaration, moreover, specially dear to Him. As it formed the theme of this ever-memorable *sermon* during His public ministry, so when He was sealing up the inspired record—the last utterances of His voice on earth, till that voice shall be heard again on the throne, contained the same life-giving invitation,—"Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." Oh! as the echoes of that gracious saying—this blast of the silver trumpet—are still sounding to the ends of the world, may this be the recorded result,

"AS HE SPAKE THESE WORDS MANY BELIEVED ON HIM."

15TH EVENING.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said"—

"My yoke is easy, and my burden is light."—Matt. ix. 30.

The Joyful Servitude.

CAN the same be said of Satan, or sin? With regard to *them*, how faithfully true rather is the converse—"My yoke is *heavy*, and my burden is *grievous!*" Christ's service is a happy service, the *only* happy one; and even when there is a cross to carry, or a yoke to bear, it is His own appointment. "*My* yoke." It is sent by no untried friend. Nay, He who puts it on His people, bore this very yoke Himself. "He *carried* our sorrows." How blessed this feeling of holy servitude to so kind a Master! not like "dumb, driven cattle," goaded on, but *led*, and led often most tenderly when the yoke and the burden are upon us. The great apostle rarely speaks of him-

self under any other title but *one*. That *one* he seems to make his boast. He had much whereof he might glory ;—he had been the instrument in saving thousands —he had spoken before kings—he had been in Cæsar's palace and Cæsar's presence—he had been caught up into the third heavens,—but in all his letters this is his joyful prefix and superscription, "The *Servant* (literally, *the slave*) of Jesus Christ!"

Reader! dost thou know this blessed servitude? Canst thou say with a joyful heart, "O Lord, truly I am Thy servant"? He is no hard taskmaster. Would Satan try to teach thee so? Let this be the refutation, "He loved me, and gave *Himself* for *me*." True, the yoke is the appointed discipline he employs in training His children for immortality. But be comforted! "It is His tender hand that *puts* it on, and *keeps* it on." He will suit the yoke to the neck, and the neck to the yoke.

He will suit His grace to your trials. Nay, He will bring you even to be in love with these, when they bring along with them such gracious unfoldings of His own faithfulness and mercy. How His people need thus to be in heaviness through manifold temptations, to keep them meek and submissive! "Jeshurun (like a bullock unaccustomed to the harness, fed and pampered in the stall) waxed fat, and kicked." Never is there more gracious love than when God takes His own means to curb and subjugate, to humble us, and to prove us--bringing us out from ourselves, our likings, our confidences, our prosperity, and putting us under the needed YOKE.

And who has ever repented of that joyful servitude? Among all the ten thousand regrets that mingle with a dying hour, and oft bedew with bitter tears a dying pillow, who ever told of regrets and repentance here?

Tried believer! has He ever failed

thee? Has His yoke been too grievous? Have thy tears been unalleviated —thy sorrows unsolaced—thy temptations above that thou wert able to bear? Ah! rather canst thou not testify, "The word of the Lord is tried;" I cast my burden upon Him, and He "sustained me"? How have seeming difficulties melted away! How has the yoke lost its heaviness, and the cross its bitterness, in the thought of who thou wert bearing it for! There is a promised rest in the very carrying of the yoke; and a better rest remains for the weary and toil-worn when the appointed work is finished; for thus saith "that same Jesus,"—

"TAKE MY YOKE UPON YOU, AND LEARN OF ME, . . . AND YE SHALL FIND REST UNTO YOUR SOULS."

16TH EVENING.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said"—

"As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you."—John xv. 9.

The Measure of Love.

THIS is the most wondrous verse in the Bible. Who can sound the unimagined depths of that love which dwelt in the bosom of the Father from all eternity towards His Son?—and yet here is the Saviour's own exponent of His love towards His people!

There is no subject more profoundly mysterious than those mystic intercommunings between the first and second persons in the adorable Trinity before the world was. Scripture gives us only some dim and shadowy revelations regarding them—distant gleams of light, and no more. Let one suffice. "*Then* I was by Him, as one brought up with Him, and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him."

We know that earthly affection is deepened and intensified by increased familiarity with its object. The friendship of yesterday is not the sacred, hallowed thing, which years of growing intercourse have matured. If we may with reverence apply this test to the highest type of holy affection, what must have been that interchange of love which the measureless lapse of Eternity had fostered—a love, moreover, not fitful, transient, vacillating, subject to altered tones and estranged looks—but pure, constant, untainted, without one shadow of turning! And yet listen to the "words of Jesus," *As* the Father hath loved *me*, *so* have I loved *you!* It would have been infinitely more than we had reason to expect, if He had said, "As my Father hath loved ANGELS, so have I loved you." But the love borne to no finite beings is an appropriate symbol. Long before the birth of time or of worlds,

that love existed. It was coeval with Eternity itself. Hear how the two themes of the Saviour's eternal rejoicing—the *love of His Father*, and His *love for sinners*—are grouped together; —"Rejoicing always before HIM, *and* in the habitable part of His *earth!*"

To complete the picture, we must take in a counterpart description of the *Father's* love to us;—"*Therefore* doth my Father love me," says Jesus in another place, "*because* I lay down my life!" God had an all-sufficiency in His own love—He needed not the taper-love of creatures to add to His glory or happiness; but He seems to say, that so intense is His love for us, that He loves even His beloved Son *more* (if infinite love be capable of increase), because He laid down His life for the guilty! It is regarding the Redeemed it is said, "He shall *rest* in His love—He shall rejoice over *them* with singing."

In the assertion, "God is love," we

are left truly with no mere unproved averment regarding the existence of some abstract quality in the divine nature. "Herein," says an apostle, "perceive we THE LOVE,"—(it is added in our authorized version, "of God," but, as it has been remarked, "Our translators need not have added *whose* love, for there is but one such specimen") —"*because* He laid down His life for us." No expression of love can be wondered at after *this*. Ah, how miserable are our best affections compared with His! "*Our* love is but the reflection—cold as the moon; *His* is as the Sun." Shall we refuse to love Him more in return, who hath *first* loved, and so *loved us?*

17TH EVENING.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said"—

"Only believe."—Mark v. 36.

The Brief Gospel.

THE briefest of the "words of Jesus," but one of the most comforting. They contain the essence and epitome of all saving truth.

Reader! is *Satan* assailing thee with tormenting fears? Is the thought of thy sins—the guilty past—coming up in terrible memorial before thee, almost tempting thee to give way to hopeless despondency? Fear not! A gentle voice whispers in thine ear,—"*Only believe.*" "Thy sins are great, but My grace and merits are greater. 'Only believe' that I died for thee—that I am living for thee and pleading for thee, and that 'the faithful saying' is as 'faithful' as ever, and as 'worthy of all acceptation' as ever."—Art thou

a *backslider?* Didst thou once run well? Has thine own guilty apostacy alienated and estranged thee from that face which was once all love, and that service which was once all delight? Art thou breathing in broken-hearted sorrow over the holy memories of a close walk with God—"Oh that it were with me as in months past, when the candle of the Lord did shine"? "*Only believe.*" Take this thy mournful soliloquy, and convert it into a prayer. "Only believe" the word of Him whose ways are not as man's ways—"Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backsliding."—Art thou beaten down with some heavy *trial?* have thy fondest schemes been blown upon—thy fairest blossoms been withered in the bud? has wave after wave been rolling in upon thee? hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious? Hear the "word of Jesus" resounding amid the thickest midnight of gloom—penetrating even

through the vaults of the dead—"Believe, *only believe.*" There is an infinite *reason* for the trial—a lurking thorn that required removal, a gracious lesson that required teaching. The dreadful severing blow was dealt in love. God will be glorified in it, and your own soul made the better for it. Patiently wait till the light of immortality be reflected on a receding world. Here you must take His dealings on trust. The word of Jesus to you now is, "*Only believe.*" The word of Jesus in eternity (every inner meaning and undeveloped purpose being unfolded), "Said I not unto thee that if thou wouldst *but* BELIEVE, thou shouldst SEE the glory of God?"—Are you fearful and agitated in *the prospect of death?* Through fear of the last enemy, have you been all your lifetime subject to bondage?—"*Only believe.*" "As thy day is, so shall thy strength be." Dying grace will be given when a dying hour

comes. In the dark river a sustaining arm will be underneath you, deeper than the deepest and darkest wave. Ere you know it, the darkness will be past, the true light shining,—the whisper of faith in the nether valley, "Believe! believe!" exchanged for angel-voices exclaiming, as you enter the portals of glory, "No longer through a glass darkly, but now face to face!"

Yes! "Jesus Himself had no higher remedy for sin, for sorrow, and for suffering, than those two words convey. At the utmost extremity of His own distress, and of His disciples' wretchedness, He could only say, 'Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.' 'Believe, only believe.'"

"LORD, I BELIEVE, HELP THOU MINE UNBELIEF."

18TH EVENING

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said"—

"Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid."—Mark vi. 50.

The Great Calm.

"IT is I" (or as our old version has it, more in accordance with the original), "I AM! be not afraid!" Jesus lives! His people may dispel their misgivings—Omnipotence treads the waves! To sense, it may seem at times to be otherwise;—wayward accident and chance may appear to regulate human allotments; but not so: "The Lord's voice is upon the waters,"—He sits at the helm guiding the tempest-tossed bark, and guiding it well.

How often does He come to us as He did to the disciples in that midnight hour when all seems lost—"in the fourth watch of the night,"—when we least looked for Him; or when, like the shipwrecked apostle, "for days together

neither sun nor stars appeared, and no small tempest lay on us; when all hope that we should be saved seemed to be taken away,"—how often, *just at that moment*, is the "word of Jesus" heard floating over the billows!

Believer! art thou in trouble? listen to the voice in the storm, "Fear not, *I* AM." That voice, like Joseph's of old to his brethren, may *seem* rough, but there are gracious undertones of love. "It is I," he seems to say; It *was* I, that roused the storm; It is I, who, when it has done its work, will calm it, and say, "Peace, be still." Every wave rolls at My bidding— every trial is My appointment—all have some gracious end; they are not sent to dash you against the sunken rocks, but to waft you nearer heaven. Is it *sickness?* I am He who bare your sicknesses; the weary wasted frame, and the nights of languishing were sent by Me. Is it *bereavement?* I AM "the Brother" born

for adversity—the loved and lost were plucked away by Me. Is it *death ?* I AM the "Abolisher of death," seated by your side to calm the waves of ebbing life; it is *I*, about to fetch My pilgrims *home*.—It is my voice that speaks, "The Master is come, and calleth for thee."

Reader! thou wilt have reason yet to praise thy God for every one such storm! This is the history of every heavenly voyager: "*So* He bringeth them to their desired haven." "*So!*" That word, in all its unknown and diversified meaning, is in *His* hand. He suits His dealings to every case. "*So!*" With some it is through quiet seas unfretted by one buffetting wave. "*So!*" With others it is "mounting up to heaven, and going down again to the deep." But whatever be the leading and the discipline, here is the grand consummation, "*So* He bringeth them unto their desired haven." It might have been with thee the moanings of an eternal

night-blast—no lull or pause in the storm; but soon the darkness will be past, and the hues of morn tipping the shores of glory!

And what, then, should your attitude be? "Looking unto Jesus" (literally, looking *from*, *unto*); looking away from self, and sin, and human props and refuges and confidences, and fixing the eye of unwavering and unflinching faith on a reigning Saviour. Ah, how a real quickening sight of Christ dispels all guilty fears! The Roman keepers of old were affrighted, and became as dead men. The lowly Jewish women feared not; why? "*I know that ye seek Jesus!*" Reader! let thy weary spirit fold itself to rest under the composing "word" of a gracious Saviour, saying—

"I WAIT FOR THE LORD, MY SOUL DOTH WAIT, AND IN HIS WORD DO I HOPE."

19TH EVENING.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said"—

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you : not as the world giveth, give I unto you."—John xiv. 27.

The Dying Legacy.

How we treasure the last sayings of a dying parent! How specially cherished and memorable are his last looks and last words! Here are the last words—the parting legacy—of a dying Saviour. It is a legacy of *peace.*

What peace is this? It is His own purchase—a peace arising out of free forgiveness through His precious blood. It is sung in concert with "Glory to God in the highest"—a peace made as sure to us as eternal power and infinite love *can make* it! It is *peace* the soul wants. Existence is one long-drawn sigh after repose. *That* is nowhere else to be found, but through the blood of His cross! "Being justified by faith,

we *have* peace with God." "He giveth his beloved *rest!*"

How different from the false and counterfeit peace in which so many are content to live, and content to die! The world's peace is all well, so long as prosperity lasts—so long as the stream runs smooth, and the sky is clear; but when the cataract is at hand, or the storm is gathering, where is it? It is *gone!* There is no calculating on its permanency. Often when the cup is fullest, there is the trembling apprehension that in one brief moment it may be dashed to the ground. The soul may be saying to itself, "Peace, peace;" but, like the writing on the sand, it may be obliterated by the first wave of adversity. But, "Not as the world giveth!" The peace of the believer is deep—calm—lasting—*ever*lasting. The world, with all its blandishments, cannot give it. The world, with all its vicissitudes and fluctuations, cannot take it away!

It is brightest in the hour of trial; it lights up the final valley-gloom. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace." Yes! how often is the believer's death-bed like the deep calm repose of a summer-evening's sky, when all nature is hushed to rest; the departing soul, like the vanishing sun, peacefully disappearing only to shine in another and brighter hemisphere! "I seem," said Simeon on his death-bed, "to have nothing to do but to wait: there is now nothing but *peace*, the *sweetest peace*."

Believer! do you know this peace which passeth understanding? Is it "keeping (literally, '*garrisoning* as in a citadel') your heart"? Have you learnt the blessedness of waking up, morning after morning, and feeling, "I am at peace with my God;" of beholding by faith the true Aaron—the great High Priest—coming forth from "the holiest of all" to "bless His people

with peace"? Waves of trouble may be murmuring around you, but they cannot touch you; you are in the rock-crevice athwart which the fiercest tornado sweeps by. Oh! leave not the making up of your peace with God to a dying hour! It will be a hard thing to smooth the death pillow, if peace be left unsought till then. Make sure of it *now*. He, the true Melchisedec, is willing *now* to come forth to meet you with bread and wine—emblems of peaceful gospel blessings. All the "words of Jesus" are so many rills contributing to make your peace flow as a river;—"These things have I spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace."

"I WILL HEAR WHAT GOD THE LORD WILL SPEAK, FOR HE WILL SPEAK PEACE UNTO HIS PEOPLE AND TO HIS SAINTS."

20TH EVENING.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said"—

"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.—Matt. xxviii. 18.

The Supreme Investiture.

WHAT an empire is this! Heaven and earth—the Church militant — the Church triumphant—angels and archangels—saints and seraphs. At His mandate the billows were hushed—demons crouched in terror—the grave yielded its prey! "Upon His head are many crowns." He is made "head over *all things* to His Church." Yes! over *all things*, from the minutest to the mightiest. He holds the stars in His right hand:—He walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, feeding every candlestick with the oil of his grace, and preserving every star in its spiritual orbit. The Prince of Darkness has "a power," but, God be praised,

it is not an "all power;" *potent*, but not *omnipotent*. Christ holds him in a chain. He hath set bounds that he may not pass over. "Satan," we read in the book of Job, "went out (*Chaldee paraphrase*, 'with a licence') from the presence of the Lord." He was not allowed even to enter the herd of swine till Christ permitted him. He only "*desired*" to have Peter that he might "sift him;" there was a mightier countervailing agency at hand: "*I* have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not."

Believer! how often is there nothing but this grace of Jesus between thee and everlasting destruction! Satan's key fitting the lock in thy wayward heart; but a stronger than the strong man barring him out;—the power of the adversary fanning the flame; the Omnipotence of Jesus quenching it. Art thou even now feeling the strength of thy corruptions, the weakness of thy graces, the presence of some outward or

inward temptation? Look up to Him who has promised to make his grace sufficient for thee; "all power" is His prerogative; "all-sufficiency in all things" is His promise. It is power, too, in conjunction with tenderness. He who sways the sceptre of universal empire "gently leads" His weak, and weary, and burdened ones:—He who counts the number of the stars, loves to count the number of their sorrows; nothing too great, nothing too insignificant for *Him*. He puts every tear into His bottle! He paves His people's pathway with love!

Blessed Jesus! my everlasting interests cannot be in better or in safer keeping than in Thine. I can exultingly rely on the "*all-power*" of thy Godhead. I can sweetly rejoice in the *all-sympathy* of Thy Manhood. I can confidently repose in the sure wisdom of Thy dealings. "Sometimes," says one, "we expect the blessing in *our* way; He

chooses to bestow it in *His*." But His way and His will must be the best. Infinite love, infinite power, infinite wisdom, are surely infallible guarantees. His purposes nothing can alter. His promises never fail. His word never falls to the ground.

"HEAVEN AND EARTH SHALL PASS AWAY, BUT MY WORDS SHALL NOT PASS AWAY."

21st Evening.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said"—

"He shall glorify me: for He shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you."—John xvi. 14.

The Divine Glorifier.

The Holy Spirit glorifying Jesus in the unfolding of His person, and character, and work, to His people! The great ministering agent between the Church on earth and its glorified Head in heaven,—carrying up to the Intercessor on the throne, the ever-recurring wants and trials, the perplexities and sins, of believers; and receiving out of His inexhaustible treasury of love,—comfort for their sorrows—strength for their weakness—sympathy for their tears—fulness for their emptiness,—and *this* the one sublime end and object of His gracious agency,—"*He shall glorify Me.*" "He shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak."

My words of sympathy—My omnipotent pleadings—the tender messages sent from an unchanged Human Heart, —all these shall He speak. "He shall tell you," says an old divine, commenting on this passage, "He shall tell you nothing but stories of my love." *(Goodwin.)* He will have an ineffable delight in magnifying Me in the affections of My Church and people, and endearing Me to their hearts; and He is all worthy of credence, for He is "the Spirit of truth."

How faithful has He been in every age to this His great office as "the glorifier of Jesus!" See the first manifestation of His power in the Christian Church at the day of Pentecost. What was the grand truth which forms the focus-point of interest in that unparalleled scene, and which brings three thousand stricken penitents to their knees? *It is the Spirit's unfolding of Jesus*—glorifying *Him* in eyes that before saw in

Him no beauty! Hear the key-note of that wondrous sermon, preached "in demonstration of the Spirit, and with power,"—"HIM hath God exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to His people, and forgiveness of sins."

Ah! it is still the same peerless truth which the Spirit delights to unfold to the stricken sinner, and, in unfolding it, to make it mighty to the pulling down of strongholds. All these glorious inner beauties of Christ's work and character are undiscerned and undiscernible by the natural eye. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth." "No man can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." He is the great Forerunner—a mightier than the Baptist—proclaiming, "Behold the Lamb of God!"

Reader! any bright and realizing view you have had of the Saviour's glory and excellency, is of the Spirit's imparting. When in some hour of sor-

row you have been led to cleave with pre-eminent consolation to the thought of the Redeemer's exalted sympathy—His dying, ever-living love;—or in the hour of death, when you feel the sustaining power of His exceeding great and precious promises; what is this, but the Holy Spirit, in fulfilment of His all-gracious office, taking of the things of Christ, and shewing them unto you; thus enabling you to magnify Him in your body, whether it be by life or death? As your motto should ever be, "*None* BUT *Christ*," and your ever-increasing aspiration, "*More* OF *Christ*," seek to bear in mind who it is that is alone qualified to impart the "excellency of this knowledge."

"THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH WHICH PROCEEDETH FROM THE FATHER, HE SHALL TESTIFY OF ME."

22D EVENING.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said"—

"Your sorrow shall be turned into joy."—John xvi. 20.

The Joyful Transformation.

CHRIST'S people are a sorrowing people! Chastisement is their badge—"great tribulation" is their appointed discipline. When they enter the gates of glory, He is represented as wiping away tears from their eyes. But, weeping ones, be comforted! Your Lord's special mission to earth—the great errand He came from heaven to fulfil, was "to bind up the broken-hearted." Your trials are meted out by a tender hand. He *knows* you too well—He *loves* you too well—to make this world tearless and sorrowless! "There must be rain, and hail, and storm," says Rutherford, "in the saint's cloud." Were your earthly course

strewed with flowers, and nothing but sunbeams played around your dwelling, it would lead you to forget your *nomadic* life,—that you are but a sojourner here. The tent must at times be struck, pin by pin of the moveable tabernacle taken down, to enable you to say and to feel in the spirit of a pilgrim, "I desire a better country." Meantime, while sorrow is your portion, think of Him who says, "I know your sorrows." Angels cannot say so—they cannot sympathise with you, for trial is a strange word to them. But there is a mightier than they who *can*. All He sends you and appoints you is in love. There is a provision and condition wrapt up in the bosom of every affliction, "*if need be;*" coming from His hand, sorrows and riches are to His people convertible terms. If tempted to murmur at their trials, they are often murmuring at disguised mercies. "Why do you ask me," said Simeon, on his death-

bed, "what I *like?* I am the Lord's patient--I cannot but like *everything.*"

And *then*—"your sorrow shall be turned into joy." "The morning cometh"--that bright morning when the dew-drops collected during earth's night of weeping shall sparkle in its beams; when in one blessed *moment* a life-long experience of trial will be effaced and forgotten, or remembered only by contrast, to enhance the fulness of the joys of immortality. What a revelation of gladness! The map of time disclosed, and every little rill of sorrow, every river will be seen to have been flowing heavenwards, — every rough blast to have been sending the bark nearer the haven! In that joy, God Himself will participate. In the last "words of Jesus" to His people when they are standing by the triumphal archway of Glory, ready to enter on their thrones and crowns, He speaks

of their joy as if it were all *His own.* "Enter ye into the joy *of your Lord.*"

Reader! may this joy be yours! Sit loose to the world's joys. Have a feeling of chastened gratitude and thankfulness when you have them; but beware of resting in them, or investing them with a permanency they cannot have. Jesus had his eye on *heaven* when he added

"YOUR JOY NO MAN TAKETH FROM YOU."

23D EVENING

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said"—

"Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory." —John xvii. 34.

The Omnipotent Prayer.

THIS is not the petition of a suppliant, but the claim of a conqueror. There was only *one* request He ever made, or ever *can* make, that was refused; it was the prayer wrung forth by the presence and power of superhuman anguish: "Father, *if it be possible*, let this cup pass from me"! Had that prayer been answered, never could one consolatory "word of Jesus" have been ours. "*If it be possible;*" —*but* for that gracious parenthesis, we must have been lost for ever! In unmurmuring submission, the bitter cup *was* drained; all the dread penalties of the law were borne, the atonement completed, an all-perfect righteousness wrought out; and now, as the

stipulated reward of His obedience and sufferings, the Victor claims His trophies. What are they? Those that were given Him of the Father — the countless multitudes redeemed by His blood. These He "*wills*" to be with Him "where He is"—the spectators of His glory, and partakers of His crown. Wondrous word and will of a dying testator! His last prayer on earth is an importunate pleading for their glorification; His parting wish is to meet them in heaven: as if these earthly jewels were needed to make His crown complete,—their happiness and joy the needful complement of His own!

Reader! learn from this, the grand element in the bliss of your future condition — it is *the presence of Christ;* "*with Me* where I am." It matters comparatively little as to the locality of heaven. "We shall see *Him* as He is," is "the blessed hope" of the Christian. Heaven would be no heaven without

Jesus; the withdrawal of His presence would be like the blotting out of the sun from the firmament; it would uncrown every seraph, and unstring every harp. But, blessed thought! it is His own stipulation in His testamentary prayer, that Eternity is to be spent in union and communion with *Himself*, gazing on the unfathomed mysteries of His love, becoming more assimilated to His glorious image, and drinking deeper from the ocean of His own joy.

If anything can enhance the magnitude of this promised bliss, it is the concluding words of the verse, in which He grounds His plea for its bestowment: "*I will*—that they behold my glory;"—why? "For Thou lovest (not *them*, but) ME before the foundation of the world!" It is equivalent to saying, "If Thou wouldst give *Me* a continued proof of Thine everlasting love and favour to Myself, it is by loving and exalting My redeemed people.

In loving *them* and glorifying them, Thou art loving and glorifying Me: so endearingly are their interests and my own bound up together!"

Believer! think of that all-prevailing voice, at this moment pleading for thee within the veil!—that omnipotent "*Father, I will,*" securing every needed boon! There is given, so to speak, a blank *cheque* by which He and His people may draw indefinite supplies out of the exhaustless treasury of the Father's grace and love. God Himself endorses it with the words, "Son, Thou art ever with me, and all that I have is Thine." How it would reconcile us to Earth's bitterest sorrows, and hallow Earth's holiest joys, if we saw them thus hanging on the "*will*" of an all-wise Intercessor, who ever pleads in love, and never pleads in vain!

"BE IT UNTO ME ACCORDING TO THY WORD."

24TH EVENING.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said"—

"Because I live, ye shall live also."—John xiv. 19.

The Immutable Pledge.

GOD sometimes selects the most stable and enduring objects in the material world to illustrate His unchanging faithfulness and love to His Church. "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so doth the Lord compass His people." But here, the Redeemer fetches an argument from *His own everlasting nature.* He stakes, so to speak, His own existence on that of His saints. "*Because I live*, ye shall live also."

Believer! read in this "word of Jesus" thy glorious title-deed. *Thy Saviour lives*—and His life is the guarantee of thine own. Our true Joseph is alive. "He is our Brother. He talks kindly to us!" That life of His, is all

that is between us and everlasting ruin. But with Christ for our life, how inviolable our security! The great Fountain of being must first be dried up, before the streamlet can. The great Sun must first be quenched, ere one glimmering satellite which He lights up with His splendour can. Satan must first pluck the crown from that glorified Head, before he can touch one jewel in the crown of His people. They cannot shake one pillar without shaking first the throne. "If we perish," says Luther, "Christ perisheth with us."

Reader! is thy life now "hid with Christ in God"? Dost thou know the blessedness of a vital and living union with a living live-giving Saviour? Canst thou say with humble and joyous confidence, amid the fitfulness of thine own ever-changing frames and feelings, "Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me"? "*Jesus*

liveth!"—They are the happiest words a lost soul and a lost world can hear! Job, four thousand years ago, rejoiced in them. "I know," says he, "that I have *a living Kinsman.*" John, in his Patmos exile, rejoiced in them. "I am He that liveth" (or *the Living One*), was the simple but sublime utterance with which he was addressed by that same "Kinsman," when He appeared arrayed in the lustres of His glorified humanity. "This is *the* record" (as if there was a whole gospel comprised in the statement), "that God hath given to us eternal life, and this *life* is in His Son." St. Paul, in the 8th chapter to the Romans—that finest portraiture of Christian character and privilege ever drawn, begins with "no condemnation," and ends with "no separation." Why "no separation"? Because the life of the believer is incorporated with that of his adorable Head and Surety. The colossal Heart of redeemed humanity beats

upon the throne, sending its mighty pulsations through every member of His body; so that, before the believer's spiritual life can be destroyed, Omnipotence must become feebleness, and Immutability become mutable!

But, blessed Jesus, "Thy word is very sure, therefore Thy servant loveth it."

"I GIVE UNTO THEM ETERNAL LIFE AND THEY SHALL NEVER PERISH, NEITHER SHALL ANY MAN PLUCK THEM OUT OF MY HAND."

25TH EVENING.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said"—

"Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."—Matt. xxviii. 20.

The Abiding Presence.

SUCH were "the words of Jesus" when he was just about to ascend to Heaven. The mediatorial throne was in view—the harps of glory were sounding in His ears; but all His thoughts are on the pilgrim Church He is to leave behind. His last words and benedictions are for *them*. "I go," he seems to say, "to Heaven, to my purchased crown—to the fellowship of angels—to the presence of my Father; *but*, nevertheless, 'Lo! I am with *you* alway, even unto the end of the world.'"

How faithfully did the apostles, to whom this promise was first addressed, experience its reality! Hear the testimony of the beloved disciple who had

once leant on his Divine Master's bosom. —who "had heard, and seen, and looked upon Him." That glorified bosom was now hid from his sight; but does he speak of an absent Lord, and of His fellowship only as among the holy memories of the past? No! with rejoicing emphasis he can exclaim—"Truly our fellowship IS with . . . . *Jesus Christ.*"

Amid so much that is fugitive here, how the heart clings to this assuranco of the abiding presence of the Saviour! Our best earthly friends—a few weeks may estrange them;—centuries have rolled on—Christ is still the same. How blessed to think, that if I am indeed a child of God, there is not the lonely instant I am without His guardianship! When the beams of the morning visit my chamber, the brighter beams of a brighter Sun are shining upon me. When the shadows of evening are gathering around, "it is not night, if He, the unsetting 'Sun of my

soul,' is near." He is no fitful companionship—present in prosperity, gone in adversity. He never changes. He is always the same,—in sickness and solitude, in joy and in sorrow, in life and in death. Not more faithfully did the pillar-cloud and column of fire of old precede Israel, till the last murmuring ripple of Jordan fell on their ears on the shores of Canaan, then does the presence and love of Jesus abide with his people. Has His word of promise ever proved false? Let the great cloud of witnesses now in glory testify. "Not one thing hath failed of all that the Lord our God hath spoken." *This* "word of the Lord is tried"—"having loved his own, which were in the world, He loved them *unto the end.*"

Believer! art thou troubled and tempted? Do dark providences and severe afflictions seem to belie the truth and reality of this gracious assurance? "If the Lord be indeed with us, why

has all this befallen us?" Be assured He has some faithful end in view. By the removal of prized and cherished earthly props and refuges, He would unfold more of His own tenderness. Amid the wreck and ruin of earthly joys, which, it may be, the grave has hidden from your sight, One nearer dearer, tenderer still, would have you say of Himself, "*The Lord liveth;* and blessed be my Rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted." "Thanks be to God, who *always* maketh us to triumph in Christ." Yes! and never more so than when, stripped of all competing objects of creature affection, we are left, like the disciples on the Mount, with "*Jesus only!*"

"THESE THINGS HAVE I SPOKEN UNTO YOU THAT IN ME YE MIGHT HAVE PEACE."

26TH EVENING.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said"—

"I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."—Matt. xi. 25.

The Resurrection and Life.

WHAT a voice is this breaking over a world which for six thousand years has been a dormitory of sin and death! For four thousand of these years, heathendom could descry no light through the bars of the grave; her oracles were dumb on the great doctrine of a future state, and more especially regarding the body's resurrection. Even the Jewish Church, under the Old Testament dispensation, seemed to enjoy little more than fitful and uncertain glimmerings, like men groping in the dark. It required death's great Abolisher to shew, to a benighted world, the luminous "path of life." With Him rested the "bringing in of a better hope"—the

unfolding of "the mystery which had been hid from ages and generations." Marvellous disclosure! that this mortal frame, decomposed and resolved into its original dust, shall yet start from its ashes, remodelled and reconstructed—"a glorified body!" Not like "the earthly tabernacle" (a mere shifting and moveable *tent*, as the word denotes), but incorruptible—immortal! The beauteous transformation of the insect from its chrysalis state—the buried seed springing up from its tiny grave to the full-eared corn or gorgeous flower—these are nature's mute utterances as to the possibility of this great truth, which required the unfoldings of "a more sure word of prophecy." But the Gospel has fully revealed what Reason, in her loftiest imaginings, could not have dreamt of. Jesus "hath brought life and immortality to light." He, the Bright and Morning Star, hath "turned the shadow of death into the morning." He gives,

in His own resurrection, the earnest of that of His people;—He is the first-fruits of the immortal harvest yet to be gathered into the garner of Heaven.

Precious truth! This "word of Jesus" spans like a celestial rainbow the entrance to the dark valley. Death is robbed of its sting. In the case of every child of God, the grave holds in custody precious, because redeemed, dust. Talk of it not, as being committed to a dishonoured tomb!—it is locked up, rather, in the casket of God until the day "when He maketh up His jewels," when it will be fashioned in deathless beauty like unto the glorified body of the Redeemer. Angels, meanwhile, are commissioned to keep watch over it, till the trump of the archangel shall proclaim the great "Easter of creation." They are the "reapers," waiting for the world's great "Harvest Home," when Jesus Himself shall come again—not as He once did, humiliated and in sor-

row, but rejoicing in the thought of bringing back all His sheaves with him.

Afflicted and bereaved Christian!—thou who mayest be mourning in bitterness those who are not—rejoice through thy tears in these hopes "full of immortality." The silver cord is only "loosed," not broken. Perchance, as thou standest in the chamber of death, or by the brink of the grave,—in the depths of that awful solitude and silence which reigns around,—this may be thy plaintive and mournful soliloquy—"Shall the dust praise Thee?" Yes, it *shall!* This very dust that hears now unheeded thy footsteps, and unmoved thy tears, shall through eternity praise its redeeming God—it shall proclaim His truth!

"LORD, TO WHOM SHALL WE GO BUT UNTO THEE, THOU HAST THE WORDS OF ETERNAL LIFE."

27TH EVENING.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said"—

"A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father."—John xvi. 16.

The Little While.

LONG seem the moments when we are separated from the friend we love. An absent brother—how his return is looked and longed for! The "Elder Brother"—the "Living Kinsman"—sends a message to His waiting Church and people—a word of solace, telling that *soon* ("a little while"), and He will be back again, never again to leave them.

There are indeed blessed moments of communion which the believer enjoys with His beloved Lord *now;* but how fitful and transient! To-day, life is a brief Emmaus journey—the soul happy in the presence and love of an unseen Saviour. To-morrow, He is *gone;* and

the bereft spirit is led to interrogate itself in plaintive sorrow, "Where is now thy God?" Even when there is no such experience of darkness and depression, how much there is in the world around to fill the believer with sadness! His Lord rejected and disowned—His love set at naught—His providences slighted—His name blasphemed—His creation groaning and travailing in pain—disunion, too, among His people—His loving heart wounded in the house of His friends!

But "yet a little while," and all this mystery of iniquity will be finished. The absent Brother's footfall will soon be heard,—no longer "as a wayfaring man who turneth aside to tarry for a night," but to receive His people into the permanent "mansions" His love has been preparing, and from which they shall go no more out. Oh, blessed day! when creation will put on her Easter robes—when her Lord, so long dishon-

oured, will be enthroned amid the hosannahs of a rejoicing universe—angels lauding Him—saints crowning Him—sin, the dark plague-spot on His universe, extinguished forever—death swallowed up in eternal victory!

And it is but "a little while!" "Yet a little while," we elsewhere read, "and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry" (literally, "a little while as may be"). "He will stay not a moment longer," says Goodwin, "than He hath despatched all our business in Heaven for us." With what joy will He send His mission-Angel with the announcement, "the little while is at an end;" and to issue the invitation to the great festival of glory, "Come! for all things are ready!"

Child of sorrow! think often of this "*little while.*" "The days of thy mourning will soon be ended." There is a limit set to thy suffering time,—"After that ye have suffered a WHILE." Every

wave is numbered between you and the haven; and then, when that haven is reached, oh, what an apocalypse of glory! — the "little while" of time merged into the great and unending "while" of eternity!—to be *forever with the Lord*—the same unchanged and unchanging Saviour!

"A little while, and ye *shall* see me!" Would that the eye of faith might be kept more intently fixed on "that glorious appearing!" How the world, with its guilty fascinations, tries to dim and obscure this blessed hope! How the heart is prone to throw out its fibres here, and get them rooted in some perishable object! Reader! seek to dwell more habitually on this the grand consummation of all thy dearest wishes. "Stand on the edge of your nest, pluming your wings for flight." Like the mother of Sisera, be looking for the expected chariot.

28TH EVENING.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said"—

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."—Matt. v. 8.

The Beatific Vision.

HERE is Heaven! This "word of Jesus" represents the future state of the glorified to consist not in locality, but in character; the essence of its bliss is the full vision and fruition of God. Our attention is called from all vague and indefinite theories about the *circumstantials* of future happiness. The one grand object of contemplation—the "glory which excelleth," is *the sight of God Himself!* The one grand practical lesson enforced on His people, is the cultivation of that purity of heart without which none could *see*, or (even could we suppose it possible to be admitted to *see* Him) none could *enjoy* God! "The kingdom of Heaven com-

eth not with observation . . . the kingdom of God is *within* you."

Reader! hast thou attained any of this heart-purity and heart-preparation? It has been beautifully said that "the openings of the streets of heaven are on earth." Even here we may enjoy, in the possession of holiness, some foretaste of coming bliss. Who has not felt that the happiest moments of their lives were those of close walking with God—nearness to the mercy-seat—when self was surrendered, and the eye was directed to the glory of Jesus, with most single, unwavering, undivided aim? What will Heaven be, but the entire surrender of the soul to Him, without any bias to evil, without the fear of corruption within echoing to temptation without; every thought brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ; no contrariety to His mind; all in blessed unison with His will; the whole *being* impregnated with holi-

ness—the intellect purified and ennobled, consecrating all its powers to His service—memory, a holy repository of pure and hallowed recollections—the affections, without one competing rival, purged from all the dross of earthliness —the love of God, the one supreme animating passion—the glory of God, the motive principle interfused through every thought, and feeling, and action of the life immortal ;—in one word, the heart a pellucid fountain ; no sediment to dim its purity, no "angel of sorrow" to come and trouble the pool! The long night of life over, and *this* the glory of the eternal morrow which succeeds it! "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with *Thy* likeness."

Yes, this is Heaven, subjectively and objectively—*purity of heart*, and "*God all in all!*" Much, doubtless, there may and will be of a subordinate kind, to intensify the bliss of the Redeemed ; communion with saints and angels ;

re-admission into the society of death-divided friends: but all these will fade before the great central glory, "God Himself shall be with them, and be their God; they shall *see His face!*" Believers have been aptly called *heliotropes*—turning their faces as the sunflower towards the Sun of Righteousness, and hanging their leaves in sadness and sorrow when that Sun is away. It will be in Heaven the emblem is complete. *There*, every flower in the heavenly garden will be turned Godwards, bathing its tints of loveliness in the glory that excelleth! Reader, may it be yours, when o'er-canopied by that cloudless sky, to know all the marvels contained in these few glowing words, "We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

"AND EVERY MAN THAT HATH THIS HOPE IN HIM PURIFIETH HIMSELF EVEN AS HE IS PURE."

29TH EVENING.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said"—

"In my Father's house are many mansions."—John xiv. 2.

The Many Mansions.

WHAT a home aspect there is in this "word of Jesus!" He comforts His Church by telling them that soon their wilderness-wanderings will be finished,—the tented tabernacle suited to their present probation-state exchanged for the enduring mansion!" Nor will it be any strange dwelling: a *Father's* home—a *Father's* welcome awaits them. There will be accommodation for all. Thousands have already entered its shining gates,—patriarch's prophets, saints, martyrs, young and old, and still there is room!

The pilgrim's motto on earth is, "Here we have no continuing city." Even "Sabbath tents" must be struck. Holy seasons of communion must ter-

minate. "Arise, let us go hence!" is a summons which disturbs the sweetest moments of tranquillity in the Church below;—but *in Heaven*, every believer becomes a pillar in the temple of God, and "he shall *go no more out.*" Here it is but the lodging of a wayfarer turning aside to tarry for the brief night of earth. Here we are but "tenants at will;" our possessions are but moveables — ours to-day, gone to-morrow. But these "many mansions" are an inheritance incorruptible and unfading. Nothing can touch the heavenly patrimony. Once within the Father's house, and we are in the house forever!

Think, too, of Jesus, gone to *prepare* these mansions,—"I go to prepare a place for you." What a wondrous thought—Jesus now busied in Heaven in His Church's behalf! He can find no abode in all His wide dominions, befitting as a permanent dwelling for His ransomed ones. He says, "I will

make a new heaven and a new earth. I will found a special kingdom—I will rear eternal mansions expressly for those I have redeemed with My blood!"

Reader! let the prospect of a dwelling in this "house of the Lord for ever," reconcile thee to any of the roughness or difficulties in thy present path—to thy pilgrim provision and pilgrim fare. Let the distant beacon-light, that so cheeringly speaks of a *Home* brighter and better far than the happiest of earthly ones, lead thee to forget the intervening billows, or to think of them only as wafting thee nearer and nearer to thy desired haven! "Would," says a saint, who has now entered on his rest, "that one could read, and write, and pray, and eat and drink, and compose one's self to sleep, as with the thought,—soon to be in heaven, and that for ever and ever!"

"My Father's house!" How many a departing spirit has been cheered and

consoled by the sight of these glorious Mansions looming through the mists of the dark valley,—the tears of weeping friends rebuked by the gentle chiding—"If ye loved me, ye would rejoice because I said, I go unto *my Father!* Death truly is but the entrance to this our Father's house. We speak of the "*shadow of death*"—it is only the shadow which falls on the portico as we stand for a moment knocking at the longed-for gate—the next! a Father's voice of welcome is heard—

"SON! THOU ART EVER WITH ME, AND ALL THAT I HAVE IS THINE."

30TH EVENING.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said"—

"I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am there ye may be also."—John xiv. 3.

The Promised Return.

ANOTHER "word of promise" concerning the Church's "Blessed hope." Orphan'd pilgrims, dry your tears! Soon the Morning Hour will strike, and the sighs of a groaning and burdened creation be heard no more. Earth's six thousand years of toil and sorrow are waning; the Millennial Sabbath is at hand. Jesus will soon be heard to repeat concerning all his sleeping saints, what He said of old regarding one of them: "I go to awake them out of sleep!" Your beloved Lord's first coming was in humiliation and woe; His name was--the "Man of Sorrows;" He had to travel on, amid darkness and desertion, His blood-stained

path; a chaplet of thorns was the only crown He bore. But soon He will come "the second time without a sin-offering unto salvation," never again to leave His Church, but to receive those who followed Him in His cross, to be everlasting partakers with Him in His crown. He may seem to tarry. External nature, in her unvarying and undeviating sequences, gives no indication of His approach. Centuries have elapsed since He uttered the promise, and still He lingers; the everlasting hills wear no streak of approaching dawn; we seem to listen in vain for the noise of His chariot wheels. "But the Lord is not slack concerning His promise;" He gives you "this word" in addition to many others as a *keepsake*—a pledge and guarantee for the certainty of His return,—"*I will come again.*"

Who can conceive all the surpassing blessedness connected with that advent? The Elder Brother arrived to fetch the

younger brethren home! — the true Joseph revealing Himself in unutterable tenderness to the brethren who were once estranged from Him—"receiving them unto Himself"—not satisfied with apportioning a kingdom for them, but, as if all His own joy and bliss were intermingled with theirs, "Where *I am*," says He, "there *you* must be also." "Him that overcometh," says He again, "will I grant to sit with Me on My Throne."

Believer! can you *now* say with some of the holy transport of the apostle, "Whom having not seen, we love"? What must it be when you come to see Him "face to face," and that for ever and ever! If you can tell of precious hours of communion in a sin-stricken, woe-worn world, with a treacherous heart, and an imperfect or divided love, what must it be when you come, in a sinless, sorrowless state, with purified and renewed affections, to see the King

in His beauty! The letter of an absent brother, cheering and consolatory as it is, is a poor compensation for the joys of personal and visible communion. The absent Elder Brother on the Throne speaks to you *now* only by His Word and Spirit,—soon you shall be admitted to His immediate fellowship, seeing Him "as He is"—He Himself unfolding the wondrous chart of His providence and grace—leading you about from fountain to fountain among the living waters, and with His own gentle hand wiping the last lingering tear-drop from your eye. *Heaven an everlasting home with Jesus!* "Where I am, there ye may be also."—He has appended a cheering postscript to this word, on which He has "caused us to hope:"—

"HE WHICH TESTIFIETH THESE THINGS SAITH, SURELY I COME QUICKLY."

31st Evening.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said"—

"Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching."—Luke xii. 32.

The Closing Benediction.

Child of God! is this thine attitude, as the expectant of thy Lord's appearing? Are thy loins girded, and thy lights burning? If the cry were to break upon thine ears this day, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh," couldst thou joyfully respond—"Lo, this is my God, I have waited for Him"? When He may come, we cannot tell;—ages may elapse before *then*. It may be centuries before our graves are gilded with the beams of a Millennial sun; but while He *may* or may *not* come *soon*, He *must* come at some time—ay, and the day of our death is virtually to all of us the day of His coming.

Reader! put not off the solemn pre-

paration. Be not deceived or deluded with the mocker's presumptuous challenge, "Where is the promise of His coming?" See to it that the calls of an engrossing world without, do not foster this procrastinating spirit within. It may be now or never with thee. Put not off thy sowing time till harvest time. Leave nothing for a dying hour, *but to die*, and calmly to resign thy spirit into the hands of Jesus. Of all times, *that* is the least suitable to have the vessel plenished—to attend to the great business of life when life is ebbing—to trim the lamp when the oil is done and it is flickering in its socket—to begin to watch, when the summons is heard to leave the watch-tower to meet our God!

Were you never struck how often, amid the many *gentle* words of Jesus, the summons "to watch," is over and over repeated, like a succession of alarum-bells breaking ever and anon, amid

chimes of heavenly music, to rouse a sleeping Church and a slumbering world?

Let this last "Word" of thy Lord's send thee to thy knees with the question,—"Am I indeed a servant of Christ?" Have I fled to Him, and am I reposing in Him, as my only Saviour?—or am I still lingering, like Lot, when I should be escaping—sleeping, when I should be waking—neglecting and trifling, when "a long eternity is lying at my door"? He is my last and only refuge; neglect Him—*all is lost!*

Believer! thou who art standing on thy watch-tower, be more faithful than ever at thy post. Remember what is implied in watching. It is no dreamy state of inactive torpor: it is a holy jealousy over the heart—waking vigilance regarding sin—every avenue and loophole of the soul carefully guarded. *Holy living* is the best, the *only*, preparative for *holy dying*. "Persuade

yourself," says Rutherford, "the King is coming. Read His letter sent before Him. 'Behold, I come quickly;' wait with the wearied night-watch for the breaking of the Eastern sky."

Let these "*Words of Jesus*" we have now been meditating upon in this little volume, be as the Golden Bells of old, hung on the vestments of the officiating High priest, emitting sweet sounds to His spiritual Israel—telling that the *true High Priest* is still living and pleading in "the Holiest of all;" and that soon He will come forth to pour His blessing on His waiting Church. We have been pleasingly employed in gathering up a few "crumbs" falling from "the Master's table." Soon we shall have, not the "*Words*," but the *presence* of Jesus—not the crumbs falling from His table, but everlasting fellowship with the Master Himself.

"AMEN, EVEN SO, COME LORD JESUS."

"Wherefore

Comfort One Another

with

THESE WORDS."

---

1 THESS. iv. 18.

THE FAITHFUL PROMISER

It has often been felt a delightful exercise by the child of God, to take, night by night, an individual promise, and plead it at the mercy-seat. Often are your prayers *pointless*, from not following in this respect the example of the sweet psalmist of Israel, the royal promise-pleader, who delighted to direct his finger to some particular "word" of the faithful Promise, saying, "Remember thy word unto thy servant, on which thou hast caused me to hope."

The following are a few gleanings from the promise-treasury, a few crumbs from the Master's table, which may serve to help the thoughts in the hour of closet meditation or the season of sorrow.

St. M——, December, 1849.

1st Day.

"He is Faithful that Promised."

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."—Isaiah i. 18.

Pardoning Grace.

My soul, thy God summons thee to his audience-chamber. Infinite purity seeks to reason with infinite vileness. Deity stoops to speak to dust. Dread not the meeting. It is the most gracious, as well as wondrous of all conferences. Jehovah himself breaks silence. He utters the best tidings a lost soul or a lost world can hear: "God is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing unto men their trespasses." What! *scarlet* sins and *crimson* sins; and these all to be forgiven and forgotten? The just God "justifying" the unjust—the mightiest of all beings, the kindest of all. O, what is there in thee to merit such love

as this? Thou mightest have known thy God only as the "consuming fire," and had nothing before thee, save "a fearful looking for of vengeance." This gracious conference bids thee dispel thy fears. It tells thee, it is no longer a "fearful," but a *blessed* thing to be in His hands. Hast thou closed with these his overtures? Until thou art at peace with Him, happiness must be a stranger to thy bosom. Though thou hast all else besides, bereft of God thou must be "bereft indeed."

Lord, I come. As thy pardoning grace is freely tendered, so shall I freely accept it. May it be mine, even now, to listen to the gladdening accents, Son, Daughter, be of good cheer; thy sins which are many are all forgiven thee!

"REMEMBER THIS WORD UNTO THY SERVANT, UPON WHICH THOU HAST CAUSED ME TO HOPE."

2D DAY

"He is Faithful that Promised."

"As thy days, so shall thy strength be."—Deut. xxxii. 25.

Needful Grace. GOD does not give grace till the hour of trial comes. But when it *does* come, the amount of grace and the special grace required is vouchsafed. My soul, do not dwell with painful apprehensions on the future. Do not anticipate coming sorrows; perplexing thyself about the grace needed for future emergencies: to-morrow will bring its promised grace along with to-morrow's trials. God, wishing to keep his people humble and and dependent on himself, gives not a stock of grace; He metes it out for every day's exigencies, that they may be constantly travelling between their own emptiness and Christ's fulness—their own weakness and Christ's strength. But *when* the exigency comes, thou may-

est safely trust an almighty arm to bear thee through.

Is there now some "thorn in the flesh" sent to lacerate thee? Thou mayest have been entreating the Lord for its removal. Thy prayer has doubtless been heard and answered; but not in the way perhaps expected or desired by thee. The thorn may still be left to goad, the trial may still be left to buffet, but "more grace" has been given to endure them. O, how often have his people thus been lead to glory in their infirmities and triumph in their afflictions, seeing the power of Christ rests more abundantly upon them. The strength which the hour of trial brings, often makes the Christian a wonder to himself.

"REMEMBER THIS WORD UNTO THY SERVANT, UPON WHICH THOU HAST CAUSED ME TO HOPE."

3D DAY.

"He is Faithful that Promised."

"God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye always having all-sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work."—2 Cor ix. 8.

All-Sufficient Grace.

"ALL-SUFFICIENCY in all things!" Believer, surely thou art "thoroughly furnished." Grace is no scanty thing, doled out in pittances. It is a glorious treasury, which the key of prayer can always unlock, but never empty. A fountain, "full flowing, *ever* flowing, *over* flowing." Mark these three ALLS in this precious promise. It is a threefold link in a golden chain, let down from a throne of grace by a God of grace. "*All grace*"—"*all-sufficiency*" in "*all things!*" and these to "abound." O, precious thought! My wants cannot impoverish that inexhaustible treasury of grace. Myriads are hourly hanging on it, and drawing from it, and yet there is no diminution. Out of that fulness all

we too may receive, and grace for grace. My soul, dost not thou love to dwell on that all-abounding grace? Thine own insufficiency in everything, met with an "all-sufficiency in all things." Grace in all circumstances and situations, in all vicissitudes and changes, in all the varied phases of the Christian's being. Grace in sunshine and storm, in health and in sickness, in life and in death. Grace for the old believer, and the young believer, the tried believer and the weak believer and the tempted believer. Grace *for* duty, and grace *in* duty; grace to carry the joyous cup with a steady hand; grace to drink the bitter cup with an unmurmuring spirit; grace to have prosperity sanctified, grace to say, through tears, "Thy will be done."

"REMEMBER THIS WORD UNTO THY SERVANT, UPON WHICH THOU HAST CAUSED ME TO HOPE."

4TH DAY.

"He is Faithful that Promised."

"I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you."—John xiv. 18.

Comforting Grace.

BLESSED JESUS, how thy presence sanctifies trial, takes loneliness from the chamber of sickness, and gloom from the chamber of death! Bright and Morning Star, precious at all times, thou art never *so* precious as in "the dark and cloudy day." The bitterness of sorrow is well worth enduring, to have thy promised consolations. How well qualified, thou Man of sorrows, to be my Comforter! How well fitted to dry my tears, thou who didst shed so many thyself! What are *my* tears, my sorrows, my crosses, my losses, compared with thine, who didst shed first thy tears, and then thy blood for *me?* Mine are all deserved, and are infinitely less than have been merited. How different, O, spotless

Lamb of God, those pangs which rent thy guiltless bosom!

How sweet those comforts thou hast promised to the comfortless, when I think of them as flowing from an almighty *Fellow-sufferer*—"a brother born for adversity"—the "Friend that sticketh closer than a brother!" one who can say, with all the refined sympathies of a holy, exalted human nature, "I know your sorrows."

My soul, calm thy griefs. There is not a sorrow thou canst experience, but Jesus in the treasury of grace, has an exact corresponding solace. In the multitude of the *sorrows* I have in my heart, "thy *comforts* delight my soul."

"REMEMBER THIS WORD UNTO THY SERVANT, UPON WHICH THOU HAST CAUSED ME TO HOPE."

5TH DAY.

"He is Faithful that Promised."

"Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." —Luke xxii. 31, 32.

Restraining Grace.

WHAT a scene does this unfold! Satan tempting, Jesus praying; Satan sifting, Jesus pleading; the strong man assailing, the stronger than the strong beating him back.

Believer! here is the past history and present secret of thy safety in the midst of temptation. An interceding Saviour was at thy side, saying to every threatening wave, "Thus far shalt thou come, and no farther." God often permits his people to be on the very verge of the precipice, to remind them of their own weakness; but never further than the verge. The restraining hand and grace of Omnipotence is ready to rescue them. "Though he fall, he shall not be utterly

cast down;" and why not? "for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand." The wolf may be prowling for his prey; but what can he do when the Shepherd is always there, tending with the watchful eye that "neither slumbers nor sleeps?"

What believer cannot subscribe to the testimony, "When my foot slipped, thy mercy, O Lord, helped me up?" Who can look back on his past pilgrimage, and fail to see it crowded with Ebenezers with this inscription, "Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling?" My soul, where wouldst thou have been this day, hadst thou not been "*kept*" by the power of God?

"REMEMBER THIS WORD UNTO THY SERVANT, UPON WHICH THOU HAST CAUSED ME TO HOPE"

6TH DAY.

"He is faithful that Promised."

"I will heal their backsliding."—Hosea xiv. 4.

Restoring Grace.

WANDERING again! And has He not left me to perish? Stumbling and straying on the dark mountains, away from the Shepherd's eye and the Shepherd's fold, shall He not leave the erring wanderer to the fruit of his own ways, and his truant heart to go hopelessly onward in its career of guilty estrangement? "My thoughts," says God, "are not as your thoughts, neither are your ways as my ways." Man would say, "Go, perish, ungrateful apostate." God says, "Return, ye backsliding children." The Shepherd *will* not, *cannot* suffer the sheep to perish he has purchased with his own blood. How wondrous his forbearance towards it; tracking its guilty steps, and ceasing not the pursuit till he lays the wanderer on his shoul-

ders, and returns with it to his fold rejoicing.

My soul, why increase by further departures thine own distance from the fold? Why lengthen the dreary road thy gracious Shepherd has to traverse in bringing thee back? Delay not thy return. Provoke no longer his patience; venture no further on forbidden ground. He waits with outstretched arms to welcome thee once more to his bosom. Be humble for the past; trust him for the future. Think of thy former backslidings, and tremble; think of his forbearance and be filled with holy gratitude; think of his promised grace, and take courage.

"REMEMBER THIS WORD UNTO THY SERVANT, UPON WHICH THOU HAST CAUSED ME TO HOPE."

7TH DAY.

"He is faithful that promised."

"He that hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."—Phil. i. 6.

Sanctifying Grace.

READER! is the good work begun in thee? Art thou becoming holy? Is sin more and more crucified? Are thy heart's idols one by one abolished? Is the world less to thee, and eternity more to thee? Is more of thy Saviour's image impressed on thy character, and thy Saviour's love more enthroned in thy heart? Is salvation to thee more the one thing needful? Oh! take heed! there can be no middle ground, no standing still: or if it be so with thee, thy position must be a false one. The Saviour's blood is not more necessary to give thee a title to heaven, than his spirit to give thee a meetness for it. "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is *none of his*."

"Onwards," should be thy motto. There is no standing still in the life of faith. "The man," says Augustine, "who says, '*Enough*,' that man's soul is lost." Let this be the superscription in all thy ways and doings, "Holiness to the Lord." Let the monitory word exercise over thee its habitual power, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord."

Moreover, remember that to be holy is to be happy. The two are convertible terms. Holiness! It is the secret and spring of the joy of angels; and the more of holiness attained on earth—the nearer and closer my walk is with God, the more of a sweet earnest shall I have of the bliss that awaits me in a holy heaven. O my soul! let it be thy sacred ambition to "be holy."

"REMEMBER THIS WORD UNTO THY SERVANT, UPON WHICH THOU HAST CAUSED ME TO HOPE."

8TH DAY.

"He is faithful that promised."

"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings, as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." —Isaiah xl. 31.

Reviving Grace.

"WILT thou not revive us, O Lord?" My soul, art thou conscious of thy declining state? Is thy walk less with God—thy frame less heavenly? Hast thou less conscious nearness to the mercy seat—diminished communion with the Saviour? Is prayer less a privilege than it has been; the pulsations of spiritual life more languid and fitful and spasmodic; the bread of life less relished; the seen and the temporal and the tangible displacing the unseen and the eternal? Art thou sinking down into this state of drowsy self-contentment, this conformity-life with the world, forfeiting all the happiness of true relig-

ion, and risking and endangering the better life to come?

Arise, call upon thy God. "Wilt thou not revive us, O Lord?" He might have returned nothing but the withering repulse, "How often would I have gathered thee, but thou wouldst not!" "Ephraim is joined to his idols; let him alone." But "In wrath He remembers mercy." "They *shall* revive as as the corn." "The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

How and where is reviving grace to be found? He gives thee in His precious promise the key. It is on thy *knees* —by a return to thy deserted and unfrequented chamber, "*They that wait upon the Lord.*" "Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thy heart; wait, I say, on the Lord."

"REMEMBER THIS WORD UNTO THY SERVANT, UPON WHICH THOU HAST CAUSED ME TO HOPE."

9TH DAY.

"He is Faithful that Promised."

"The righteous also shall hold on his way."—Job xvii. 9.

Persevering Grace.

READER, how comforting to thee, amid the ebbings and flowings of thy changing history, to know that the change is all with thee, and not with thy God. Thy spiritual bark may be tossed on the waves of temptation, in many a dark midnight. Thou mayest think thy pilot hath left thee, and be ready continually to say, "Where is my God?" But fear not. The bark which bears thy spiritual destinies is in better hands than thine; a golden chain of covenant love links it to the throne. That chain can never snap asunder. He who holds it in his hand gives thee *this* as the pledge of your safety: "Because I live, ye shall live also."

"Why art thou then cast down, O my soul; and why art thou disquieted within

me? *hope thou in God.*" Thou wilt assuredly ride out of these stormy surges, and reach the desired haven.

But be faithful with thyself. See that there be nothing to hinder or impede thy growth in grace. Think how little may retard thy progress. One sin indulged, one temptation tampered with, one bosom traitor, may cost thee many a bitter hour and bitter tear, by separating between thee and thy God. Make it thy daily prayer, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

'REMEMBER THIS WORD UNTO THY SERVANT, UPON WHICH THOU HAST CAUSED ME TO HOPE.

10TH DAY.

"He is Faithful that Promised."

"I have the keys of hell and of death."—Rev. i. 18.

Dying Grace. AND from whom could dying grace come so welcome, as from thee, O blessed Jesus? Not only is thy name "The Abolisher of Death," but thou didst thyself *die*. Thou hast sanctified the grave by thine own presence, and divested it of all its terrors.

My soul, art thou at times afraid of this, thy last enemy? If the rest of thy pilgrimage be peaceful and unclouded, rests there a dark and portentous shadow over the terminating portals? Fear not. When that dismal entrance is reached, He who has the keys of the grave and of death suspended at his golden girdle, will impart grace to bear thee through. It is the messenger of peace. Thy Saviour calls thee. The promptings of nature when at first thou

seest the darkening wave, may be like those of the affrighted disciples when they said, "It is a spirit!" and cried out for fear.

But a gentle voice will be heard high above the storm, "It is I; be not afraid." Death, indeed, as the wages of sin, must even by the believer be regarded as an enemy. But O, blessed thought, it is thy *last* enemy—the cause of thy last tear. In a few brief moments after that tear is shed, thy God will be wiping every vestige of it away. "O Death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Welcome, vanquished foe! Birthday of heaven. "To die is gain."

"REMEMBER THIS WORD UNTO THY SERVANT, UPON WHICH THOU HAST CAUSED ME TO HOPE."

11TH DAY.

"He is Faithful that Promised."

"The Lord will give grace and glory."—Psa. lxxxiv. 11.

After Grace, Glory.

O, HAPPY day, when this toilsome warfare will all be ended, Jordan crossed, Canaan entered, the legion enemies of the wilderness no longer dreaded; sorrow, sighing, death, and, worst of all, *sin* no more either to be felt or feared.

Here is the terminating link in the golden chain of the everlasting covenant. It began with *grace;* it ends with *glory.* It began with sovereign grace in a by-past eternity, and no link will be wanting till the ransomed spirit be presented faultless before the throne.

Grace and glory! If the earnest be sweet, what must be the reality? If the wilderness table contain such rich provision, what must be the glories of the eternal banqueting-house? O, my soul, make sure of thine interest in the one,

as the blessed prelude to the other. Having access by faith into this *grace*, thou canst "rejoice in hope of the *glory* of God; for whom he *justifies*, them he also *glorifies*. Has grace begun in thee? Canst thou mark—though it should be but the drops of the incipient rill which is to terminate in such an ocean—the tiny grains which are to accumulate and issue in such an "exceeding weight of glory?" Delay not the momentous question. The day of offered grace is on the wing, its hours are fast numbering; and "no grace, no glory."

"REMEMBER THIS WORD UNTO THY SERVANT, UPON WHICH THOU HAST CAUSED ME TO HOPE."

12TH DAY.

"He is Faithful that Promised."

"I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever."—John xiv. 16

Another Comforter.

BLESSED Spirit of all grace, how oft have I grieved thee—resisted thy dealings, quenched thy strivings; and yet art thou still pleading with me. O, let me realize more than I do, my need of thy gracious influences. Ordinances, sermons, communions, providential dispensations, are nothing without thy life-giving power. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth." "No man can call Jesus, Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."

Church of the living God, is not this one cause of thy deadness? My soul, is not this the secret of thy languishing frames, repeated declensions, uneven walk, and sudden falls, that the influences of the Holy Ghost are undervalued

and unsought? Pray for the outpouring of this blessed Agent for the world's renovation, and thine own. "I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh," is the precursor of millennial bliss.

Jesus, draw near in thy mercy to this torpid heart, as thou didst of old to thy mourning disciples, and breathe upon it, and say, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." It is the mightiest of all boons; but, like the sun in the heavens, it is the freest of all. "For if ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit unto them that ask him?"

"REMEMBER THIS WORD UNTO THY SERVANT, UPON WHICH THOU HAST CAUSED ME TO HOPE."

13TH DAY.

"He is Faithful that Promised."

"All things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose."—Rom. viii. 28.

Providential Overruling.

MY soul, be still; thou art in the hands of thy covenant God. Were these strange vicissitudes in thy history the result of accident or chance, thou mightest well be overwhelmed; but "*all things*," and *this* thing, be it what it may, which may be now disquieting thee, is *one* of these "*all things*" that are working mysteriously for thy good. Trust thy God. He will not deceive thee; thy interests are with him in safe custody. When sight says, "All these things are against me," let faith rebuke the hasty conclusion, and say, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" How often does God hedge up our way with thorns, to elicit simple trust. How seldom can we *see* all things so working

for our good. But it is better discipline to *believe* it. O, for faith amid frowning providences to say, "I *know* that thy judgments are good;" and, relying in the dark, to exclaim, "though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Blessed Jesus, to thee are committed the reins of this universal empire. The same hand that was once nailed to the cross, is now wielding the sceptre on the throne—"all power" given unto thee in heaven and in earth. How can I doubt the wisdom, and faithfulness, and love of the most mysterious earthly dealing, when I know that the roll of providence is thus in the hands of Him who has given the mightiest pledge omnipotence *could* give of his tender interest in my soul's well-being, by giving *himself* for me?

"REMEMBER THIS WORD UNTO THY SERVANT, UPON WHICH THOU HAST CAUSED ME TO HOPE."

14TH DAY.

"He is Faithful that Promised."

"All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies."—Psalm xxv. 10.

Safe Walking. THE paths of the Lord! My soul, never follow thine own paths. If thou dost so, thou wilt be in danger often of following sight rather than faith—choosing the evil, and refusing the good. But "commit thy way unto the Lord, and he shall bring it to pass." Let this be thy prayer, "Show me *thy* ways, O Lord; teach me *thy* paths." O, for Caleb's spirit, "*wholly* to follow the Lord my God"—to follow him when self must be sacrificed, and hardships must be borne, and trials await me—to "walk with God," to ask in simple faith, "What wouldst thou have me to do?" to have no will of my own, save this, that God's will is to be *my* will. Here is safety, here is happiness. Fearlessly

follow the guiding Pillar. He will lead you by a *right* way, though it may be a way of hardship, and crosses, and losses, and privations, to the city of habitation. O, the blessedness of thus lying passive in the hands of God; saying, "Undertake thou for me;" dwelling with holy gratitude on past mercies and interpositions; taking these as pledges of future faithfulness and love; hearing his voice behind us, amid life's manifold perplexities, exclaiming, "This is the way; walk ye in it." Happy, surely, are every people who are in such a case. Happy, reader, will it be for thee if thou canst form the resolve in a strength greater than thine own, "This God shall be *my* God forever and ever; he shall be my *guide* even unto death."

"REMEMBER THIS WORD UNTO THY SERVANT, UPON WHICH THOU HAST CAUSED ME TO HOPE."

15TH DAY

"He is Faithful that Promised."

"As many as I love I rebuke and chasten."—Rev. iii. 19.

Love in Chastisement.

SORROWING believer, what couldst thou wish more than this? Thy furnace is severe; but look at this assurance of him who lighted it. Love is the fuel that feeds its flames. Its every spark is love; kindled by a Father's hand, and designed as a special pledge of a Father's love. How many of his dear children has he so rebuked and chastened; and all, *all* for one reason, *I love them.* The myriads in glory have passed through these furnace-fires; *there* they were chosen—*there* they were purified, sanctified, and made "vessels meet for the Master's use;" the dross and the alloy purged, that the pure metal might remain. And art thou to claim exemption from the same discipline? Art thou to think it strange, concerning these same fiery tri-

als that may be trying thee? Rather exult in them as thine adoption-privilege. Envy not those who are strangers to the refining flames, who are "without chastisement;" rather surely the severest discipline, *with a Father's love*, than the fullest earthly cup, without that Father's smile. O, for grace to say, when the furnace is hottest and the rod sorest, "Even so, *Father*." And what, after all, is the severest of thy chastisements, in comparison with what thy sins have deserved? Dost thou murmur under a Father's correcting love? What would it have been to have stood the wrath of an unpropitiated Judge, and that too *forever?* Surely, in the light of eternity, the heaviest pang of earth is indeed a "light affliction."

"REMEMBER THIS WORD UNTO THY SERVANT, UPON WHICH THOU HAST CAUSED ME TO HOPE."

16TH DAY.

"He is Faithful that Promised."

"If need be."—1 Peter, i. 6.

A Condition in Chastisement.

THREE gracious words. Not one of all my tears shed for naught. Not one stroke of the rod unneeded, or that might have been spared. Thy heavenly Father loves thee too much and too tenderly, to bestow harsher correction than thy case requires. Is it loss of health or loss of wealth, or loss of beloved friends? Be still—there was a *need be*. We are no judges of what that "need be" is; often through aching hearts we are forced to exclaim, "Thy judgments are a great deep." But God here pledges himself, that there will not be one redundant thorn in the believer's chaplet of suffering. No burden too heavy will be laid on him, and no sacrifice too great exacted *from* him. He will "temper the wind to the shorn lamb." When-

ever the "need be" has accomplished its end, then the rod is removed, the chastisement suspended, the furnace quenched.

"If need be!" O, what a pillow on which to rest thy aching head—that there is not a drop in all thy bitter cup but what a God of love saw to be absolutely necessary. Wilt thou not trust him, even though thou canst not trace the mystery of his dealings? Not too curiously prying into the "*why* it is," or "*how* it is," but satisfied that "so it is," and therefore that all must be well. "Although thou sayest thou canst not see him, yet judgment is before him; therefore trust thou in him."

"REMEMBER THIS WORD UNTO THY SERVANT, UPON WHICH THOU HAST CAUSED ME TO HOPE."

17TH DAY

"He is Faithful that Promised."

"A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench."—Matt. xii. 20.

Strength to the Weak.

WILL Jesus accept such a heart as mine—this erring, treacherous, traitor heart? The past: how many forgotten vows, broken covenants, prayerless days! How often have I made new resolutions; and as often as the reed succumbed to the first blast of temptation, and the burning flax been well-nigh quenched by guilty omissions, and guiltier commissions. O, my soul, thou art low indeed; the things that remain seem "ready to die." But thy Saviour God will not give thee over unto death. The reed is bruised; but He will not pluck it up by the roots. The flax is reduced to a smoking ember; but He will fan the decaying flame. Why wound thy loving Saviour's heart by

these repeated declensions? He will not, *cannot* give thee up. Go, mourn thy weakness and unbelief. Cry unto the strong for strength. Weary and faint one, thou hast an omnipotent arm to lean on. "*He* fainteth not, neither is weary." Listen to his own gracious assurance, "Fear not; for I am with thee. Be not dismayed; for I am thy God. I will *strengthen* thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." Leaving all thy false props and refuges, be this thy resolve, "In the Lord put I my trust; why say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain?"

"REMEMBER THIS WORD UNTO THY SERVANT, UPON WHICH THOU HAST CAUSED ME TO HOPE."

18TH DAY

"He is Faithful that Promised."

"Him that cometh to me, I will in nowise cast out."—John vi. 37.

Encouragement to the Despouding.

"CAST out!" My soul, how oft might this have been thy history? Thou hast cast off thy God; might he not oft have "cast out" thee? Yes, cast thee out as fuel for the fire of his wrath — a sapless, fruitless cumberer. And yet, notwithstanding all thy ungrateful requital for his unmerited forbearance, he is still declaring, "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth." Thy sins may be legion-like; the sand of the sea may be their befitting type; the thought of their turpitude and aggravation may be ready to overwhelm thee; but be still; thy patient God waits to be gracious.

O, be deeply humbled and softened,

because of thy guilt; resolve to dedicate thyself anew to his service; and so coming, he will *by no means* cast thee out. Despond not by reason of former shortcomings: thy sins are great, but thy Saviour's merits are greater. He is willing to forget all the past and sink it in oblivion, if there be present love and the promise of future obedience. "Simon, son of Jonas, *lovest thou me?*" Ah, how different is God's verdict from man's. After such sins as thine, man's sentence would have been, "*I* will in nowise receive." But "it is better to fall into the hands of God, than into the hands of man;" for he says, "I will in *nowise* cast out."

"REMEMBER THIS WORD UNTO THY SERVANT, UPON WHICH THOU HAST CAUSED ME TO HOPE."

19TH DAY.

"He is Faithful that Promised."

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth."—John xiv. 27.

Peace in Believing.

"THOU wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee." "Perfect peace;" what a blessed attainment. My soul, is it thine? Sure I am it *is not*, if thou art seeking it in a perishable world, or in the perishable creature, or in thy perishable self. Although thou hast all that the world would call enviable and happy, unless thou hast peace *in* God and *with* God, all else is unworthy of the name; a spurious thing, which the first breath of adversity will shatter, and the hour of death utterly annihilate. Perfect peace; what is it? It is the peace of forgiveness. It is the peace arising out of a sense of God reconciled through the blood of the everlasting covenant, resting sweetly on the bosom and the work of Jesus, to him

committing thine eternal all. My soul, stay thyself on God, that so this blessed peace may be thine. Thou hast tried the world. It has deceived thee. Prop after prop of earthly scaffolding has yielded and tottered and fallen. Has thy God ever done so? Ah, this false and counterfeit world-peace may do well for the world's work, and the world's day of prosperity. But test it in the hour of sorrow; and what can it do for thee when most it is needed? On the other hand, what though thou hast no other blessing on earth to call thine own? Thou art rich indeed, if thou canst look upwards to heaven, and say, with "unpresumptuous smile," "I am at peace with God."

"REMEMBER THIS WORD UNTO THY SERVANT, UPON WHICH THOU HAST CAUSED ME TO HOPE."

20TH DAY

"He is Faithful that Promised."

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."—Rev. xiv. 13.

Bliss in Dying.

MY soul, is this blessedness thine in prospect? Art thou ready, if called this night to lie down on thy death-pillow, sweetly to fall asleep in Jesus! What is the sting of death? It is sin. Is death, then, to thee, robbed of its sting, through your having listened to the gracious accents of pardoning love? Be of good cheer; thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee. If thou hast made up thy peace with God, resting on the work and atoning blood of his dear Son, then is the "last enemy" divested of all his terror, and thou canst say, in sweet composure, of thy dying couch and dying hour, "I will both lay me down in peace and sleep, because thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety."

Reader! ponder that solemn question.

"Am I ready to die? Am I living as I should wish I had done when that last hour arrives?" And when shall it arrive? To-morrow is not thine. Verily, there may be but a step between thee and death. O, solve the question speedily; risk no doubts and no peradventure. Every day is proclaiming anew the lesson, "The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong." Seek to live so that that hour cannot come upon thee too soon or too unexpectedly. Live a dying life. How blessed to live, how blessed to die, with the consciousness that there may be but a step between thee and glory.

"REMEMBER THIS WORD UNTO THY SERVANT, UPON WHICH THOU HAST CAUSED ME TO HOPE."

21st Day

"He is Faithful that Promised."

"In due season we shall reap, if we faint not."—Gal. vi. 9.

A Due Reaping.

BELIEVER, all the glory of thy salvation belongs to Jesus — none to thyself; every jewel in thine eternal crown is his, purchased by his blood, and polished by his Spirit. The confession of time will be the ascription of all eternity, "By the grace of God, I am what I am." But though all be of grace, thy God calls thee to personal strenuousness in the work of thy high calling; to "labor," to "fight," to "wrestle," to "*agonize;*" and the heavenly reaping will be in proportion to the earthly sowing. "He that soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully. What an incentive to holy living and increased spiritual attainments. My soul, wouldst thou be a

star shining high and bright in the firmament of glory—wouldst thou receive the ten-talent recompense? Then, be not weary. Gird on thine armor for fresh conquests. Be gaining daily some new victory over sin. Deny thyself. Be a willing cross-bearer for thy Lord's sake. Do good to all men as thou hast opportunity; be patient under provocation, slow to wrath, resigned in trial. Let the world take knowledge of thee, that thou art wearing Christ's livery, and bearing Christ's Spirit, and sharing Christ's cross. And when the reaping-time comes, He who has promised that the cup of cold water shall not go unrecompensed, will not suffer thee to lose thy reward.

"REMEMBER THIS WORD UNTO THY SERVANT, UPON WHICH THOU HAST CAUSED ME TO HOPE.'

22D DAY.

"He is faithful that Promised."

"The days of thy mourning shall be ended."—Isaiah ix. 20.

An End of Weeping.

CHRIST'S people are a weeping band, though there be much in this lovely world to make them joyous and happy. Yet when they think of sin, their own sin and the unblushing sins of a world in which their God is dishonored, need we wonder at their tears —that they should be called "mourners," and their pilgrimage-home a "valley of tears"? Bereavement, and sickness, and poverty, and death, following the track of sin, add to their mourning experience; and with many of God's best beloved, one tear is scarce dried, when another is ready to flow. Mourners rejoice. When the reaping time comes, the weeping time ends. When the white robe and the golden harp are bestowed, every remnant of the sack-

cloth attire is removed. The moment the pilgrim whose forehead is here furrowed with woe, bathes it in the crystal river of life, that moment the pangs of a lifetime of sorrow are eternally forgotten.

Reader! if thou art one of these care-worn ones, the days of thy mourning are numbered. A few more throbbings of this aching heart, and then the angel who proclaims "time to be no longer," shall proclaim also sorrow, and sighing, and mourning to be ended. Seek now to mourn thy sins more than thy sorrows; reserve thy bitterest tears for forgetfulness of thy dear Lord. The saddest and sorest of all bereavements is when the sins which have separated thee from Him evoke the anguish-cry, "Where is my God?"

"REMEMBER THIS WORD UNTO THY SERVANT, UPON WHICH THOU HAST CAUSED ME TO HOPE."

23D DAY

"He is Faithful that Promised."

"Behold, I come quickly."—Rev. iii. 11.

A Speedy Coming.

"EVEN so; come, Lord Jesus." Why tarry the wheels of thy chariot? Six thousand years this world has rolled on, getting hoary with age and wrinkled with sins and sorrows. A waiting church sees the long-drawn shadows of twilight announcing, "The Lord is at hand." Prepare, my soul, to meet him. Oh! happy days, when thine adorable Redeemer, so long dishonored and despised, shall be publicly enthroned in presence of an assembled universe, crowned Lord of all, glorified in his saints, satisfied in the fruits of his soul's travail, destroying his enemies with the brightness of his coming—the lightning-glance of his wrath; causing the hearts of his exulting people to "rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory."

Prepare, my soul, to meet him. Let it be a joyous thought to thee, thy "blessed hope," this meeting with thine elder Brother. Stand oftentimes on the watch-tower, to catch the first streak of that coming brightness, the first murmur of these chariot wheels. The world is now in preparation. It is rocking on its worn-out axle. There are voices on every side proclaiming, "He cometh, he cometh to judge the earth." Reader! art thou among the number of those who "love his appearing"? Remember the attitude of his expectant saints. "Blessed are those servants whom their Lord, when he cometh, shall find WATCHING."

"REMEMBER THIS WORD UNTO THY SERVANT, UPON WHICH THOU HAST CAUSED ME TO HOPE."

24TH DAY.

"He is Faithful that Promised."

"What I do, thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter."—John xviii. 7

Heavenly Illumination.

As the natural sun sometimes sinks in clouds, so occasionally the Christian who has a bright rising, and a brighter meridian, sets in gloom. It is not *always* "light" at his evening-time; but this we know, that when the day of immortality breaks, the last vestige of earth's shadows will forever flee away. To the closing hour of time, providence may be to him a baffling enigma; but ere the first hour has struck on heaven's chronometer, all will be clear. My soul, in God's light thou shalt see light The book of his decrees is a sealed book now; "A great deep," is all the explanation thou canst often give of his judgments; the *why* and the *wherefore* he seems to keep from us, to test our faith,

to discipline us in trustful submission, and lead us to say, "Thy will be done." But rejoice in that hereafter-light which awaits thee. Now we see through a glass darkly; but *then*, face to face. In the great mirror of eternity all the events of this checkered scene will be reflected; the darkest of them will then be seen to be bright with mercy—the severest dispensations, "only the severer aspects of his love." Pry not, then, too curiously; pronounce not too censoriously on God's dealings with thee. Wait with patience till the grand day of disclosures; one confession shall then burst from every tongue, "Righteous art thou, O Lord."

"REMEMBER THIS WORD UNTO THY SERVANT, UPON WHICH THOU HAST CAUSED ME TO HOPE."

25TH DAY

"He is Faithful that Promised."

"I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also."—John xiv. 3.

A Glorious Reunion.

If the meeting of a long absent friend or brother on earth be a joyous event, what, my soul, must be the joy of thy union with this Brother of brothers, this Friend of friends? "I will come again." Oh! what an errand of love, what a promised honor and dignity is this! His saints are to share, not his heaven only, but his immediate presence. "Where *I am, there ye* shall be also." "Father, I *will*"—it was his dying wish, a wondrous codicil in that testamentary prayer—"that those whom thou hast given me, be with me where *I am.*" Happy reunion! Blessed Saviour, if thy presence be so sweet on a sin-stricken earth, and when known only by the invisible eye of faith, what must

be that presence in a sinless heaven, unfolded in all its unutterable loveliness and glory? Happy reunion! It will be a meeting of the whole ransomed family: the Head, with all its members; the Vine, with all its branches; the Shepherd, with all his flock; the elder Brother, with all his kinsmen. Oh! the joy, too, of mutual recognition among the death-divided; ties snapt asunder on earth indissolubly renewed; severed friendships reunited; the triumph of love complete; love binding brother with brother, and friend with friend, and *all* to the Elder Brother. My soul, what thinkest thou of this heaven? Remember who it is that Jesus says shall sit with him upon his throne—"Him that overcometh."

"REMEMBER THIS WORD UNTO THY SERVANT, UPON WHICH THOU HAST CAUSED ME TO HOPE."

26TH DAY.

"He is faithful that Promised."

"And I will betroth thee unto me forever."—Hosea ii. 19.

Everlasting Espousals.

How wondrous and varied are the figures which Jesus employs to express the tenderness of his covenant love. My soul, thy Saviour God hath "married thee." Wouldst thou know the hour of thy betrothment? Go back into the depths of a past eternity, before the world was; then and there thine espousals were contracted: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." Soon shall the bridal hour arrive, when thine absent Lord shall come to welcome his betrothed bride into his royal palace. "The bridegroom tarrieth;" but see that thou dost not slumber and sleep. Surely there is much all around demanding the girded loins and the burning lamps. At "midnight," the hour when he is least expected, the cry *may*

be, it *shall* be heard, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh!" My soul, has this mystic union been formed between thee and thy Lord? Canst thou say, in humble assurance of thine affiance with Him, "my Beloved is mine, and I am his"? If so, great, unspeakably great are the glories which await thee. Thy dowry as the bride of Christ is all that omnipotence can bestow, and all that a feeble creature can receive. In the prospect of those glorious nuptials, thou needst dread no pang of widowhood. What God hath joined together, no created power can take asunder; He betroths thee, and it is "forever."

"REMEMBER THIS WORD UNTO THY SERVANT, UPON WHICH THOU HAST CAUSED ME TO HOPE."

27TH DAY.

"He is Faithful that Promised."

"This corruptible must put on incorruption."—1 Cor. xv. 53

A Joyful Resurrection.

MARVEL of marvels! the sleeping ashes of the sepulcher starting at the tones of the archangel's trumpet; the dishonored dust rising a glorified body, like its risen Lord's. At death, the soul's bliss is perfect in kind; but that bliss is not complete in degree, until reunited to the tabernacle it has left behind to mingle with the sods of the valley. But tread lightly on that grave; it contains precious because ransomed dust. My body as well as my spirit was included in the redemption-price of Calvary, and "them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." Oh! blessed jubilee-day of creation, when Christ's "dead men shall arise;" when, together with his dead body, they shall come, and the summons shall sound

forth, "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust!" All the joys of that resurrection morn we cannot tell, but its chief glory we *do* know: "When he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Like him! My soul, art thou waiting for this manifestation of the sons of God? Like him! Hast thou caught up any faint resemblance to that all-glorious image? Having this hope in thee, art thou purifying thyself even as he is pure? Be much with Jesus now, that thou mayest exult in meeting him hereafter. Thus taking him as thy guide and portion in life, thou mayest lay thee down in thy dark and noisome cell, and look forward with triumphant hope to the dawn of a resurrection morn, saying, When I awake, I am still with thee.

"REMEMBER THIS WORD UNTO THY SERVANT, UPON WHICH THOU HAST CAUSED ME TO HOPE."

28TH DAY.

"He is Faithful that Promised."

"There shall be no night there."—Rev. xxi. 25.

A Nightless Heaven.

MY soul, is it night with thee here? Art thou wearied with these midnight tossings on life's tumultuous sea? Be still; the day is breaking; soon shall thy Lord appear. "His going forth is prepared as the morning." That glorious appearing shall disperse every cloud, and usher in an eternal noontide which knows no twilight. "Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light." Everlasting light! Wondrous secret of a nightless world; the glories of a present God; the everlasting light of the Three in One, quenching the radiance of all created orbs, superseding all material luminaries. "My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning."

The haven is nearing; star after star is quenched in more glorious effulgence; every bound over these dark waves is bringing thee nearer the eternal shore. Wilt thou not, then, humbly and patiently endure weeping for the night, in the prospect of the joy that cometh in the morning? Strange realities: a world without night, a firmament without a sun; and, greater wonder still, *thyself* in this world, a joyful denizen of this nightless, sinless, sorrowless, tearless heaven, basking underneath the Fountain of uncreated light! No exhaustion of glorified body and spirit to require repose; no lassitude or weariness to suspend the ever-deepening song. "They *rest not.*"

"REMEMBER THIS WORD UNTO THY SERVANT UPON WHICH THOU HAST CAUSED ME TO HOPE"

29TH DAY.

"He is Faithful that Promised."

"When the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."—1 Peter v. 4.

A Crown of Life.

WHAT, is the beggar to be raised from the dung-hill, set among princes, and made to inherit a throne of glory? Is dust and ashes, a puny rebel, a guilty traitor, to be pitied, pardoned, loved, exalted from the depths of despair, raised to the heights of heaven, gifted with kingly honor, royally fed, royally clothed, royally attended, and at last royally crowned? O, my soul, look forward with joyous emotion to that day of wonders, when He whose head shall be crowned with many crowns shall be the dispenser of royal diadems to his people; and when they shall begin the joyful ascription of all eternity, "Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood," and

has "made us KINGS"—"to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen." Wilt thou be among the number? Shall the princes and monarchs of the earth wade through seas of blood for a corruptible crown; and wilt thou permit thyself to lose the incorruptible, or barter it for some perishable nothings of earth? O, that thou wouldst awake to thy high destiny, and live up to thy transcendent privileges as the citizen of a kingly commonwealth, a member of the blood-royal of heaven. What wouldst thou not sacrifice, what effort wouldst thou grudge, if thou wert included at last in the gracious benediction, "Come, ye blessed of my Father; inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world?"

"REMEMBER THIS WORD UNTO THY SERVANT, UPON WHICH THOU HAST CAUSED ME TO HOPE."

30TH DAY.

"He is Faithful that Promised."

"God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away."—Rev. xxi. 3, 4.

The Vision and Fruition of God.

GLORIOUS consummation! All the other glories of heaven are but emanations from this glory that excelleth. Here is the focus and centre in which every ray of light converges. God is "all in all." Heaven *without God!* it would send a thrill of dismay through the burning ranks of angels and archangels; it would dim every eye, and hush every harp, and change the whitest robe into sackcloth. And shall I then indeed "*see God*"? What, shall I gaze on these inscrutable glories, and live? Yes, God himself shall be with them, and be their God; they shall *see his face.* And not only the vision but

the *fruition.* O, how does sin in my holiest moments damp the enjoyment of Him. It is the "pure in heart" alone who can "see," far more, who can enjoy God. Even if he did reveal himself *now*, these eyes could never endure his intolerable brightness. But *then*, with a heart purified from corruption, a world where the taint of sin and the power of temptation never enters—the soul again a bright mirror, reflecting the lost image of the Godhead; all the affections devoted to their original high destiny; the love of God the motive principle, the ruling passion; the glory of God the undivided object and aim; the will no opposing or antagonist bias—man will, for the first time, know all the blessedness of his chief end, "to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever."

"REMEMBER THIS WORD UNTO THY SERVANT, UPON WHICH THOU HAST CAUSED ME TO HOPE"

ALL

The Promises of God

In Him are Yea,

AND

In Him Amen.

THE

MORNING WATCHES

AND

NIGHT WATCHES.

BY THE

REV. J. R. MACDUFF, D. D.,

AUTHOR OF "THE MIND AND WORDS OF JESUS," "FAITHFUL PROMISES," "FOOTSTEPS OF ST. PAUL," "BOW IN THE CLOUD," "FAMILY PRAYERS," ETC.

NEW YORK:

ROBERT CARTER & BROTHERS,

No. 530 BROADWAY.

1871.

The Morning Watches.

THIS little volume is designed to form, by the Divine blessing, an humble auxiliary in promoting, what is pronounced in the best of all manuals of devotion to be "a good thing,"—the shewing forth of God's "loving-kindness *in the morning*," and His "faithfulness *every night*." (Ps. xcii. 2.)

It may not be out of place to remark, regarding the verse which forms the key-note to each petition —"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee"—that the word "direct," in the original Hebrew, may literally be rendered, "set in order." It refers to the setting in order of the wood for the burnt-sacrifices in the temple of old. While the heart of the believer, according to this beautiful allusion, is represented as a spiritual altar, on which, morning after morning, he offers the oblation of prayer, this motto-verse may also serve as a magnet to keep the eye fixed, in each successive petition, on the great Antitypical Sacrifice, through whom alone it is that "the words of our mouth and the meditation of our hearts" are "acceptable" in the sight of God.

Though more strictly designed for private devotion, and therefore expressed in the first person, it is hoped, by the substitution of the plural pronoun, that the following pages may not be inappropriate for the family altar.

December 25, 1851.

1st Morning.

"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee."

"For Thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great."—Ps. xxv. 11.

For Pardon of Sin.

O God, I bless Thee that Thou hast permitted me to lie down in sleep, and to awake this morning in safety. Thou hast dispersed the darkness of another night: may no shadow of sin obscure the sunshine of thy favour and love. May the returning light of day be to me the type and emblem of that better radiance with which thou visitest the souls of Thy people, when they are enabled, in Jesus, to behold a pardoning God seated on a throne of reconciliation and grace.

I come to Thee, acknowledging my transgressions in all their heinousness. I have nothing to plead in extenuation. Warnings have been abused, providences slighted, grace resisted, Thy Spirit

grieved. It is of the Lord's mercies I am not consumed—that Thou hast not long ere now consigned me, with all this load of unpardoned guilt, to that place where pardon is unknown.

But I do rejoice to know that "there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared"—that I can bring my great sin to a great Saviour. May I be enabled to feel that this all-glorious *name* of a reconciled God in Christ is "a strong tower," into which I may "run, and be safe." Give me grace, in self-renouncing lowliness, to disown every other ground of confidence or hope of mercy, and to cast myself, a broken-hearted, humbled penitent, at the feet of Him on whom was laid the burden of all my transgressions. May mine henceforth be the blessedness of those whose "iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered." May life's joys be sweetened, and life's sorrows sanctified, and life's terminating

hour gladdened, with the assurance, "I am at peace with my God." May Thy favour brighten every scene, and the sweet sense of thy reconciling love be interfused with all my occupations. If sorrow should cloud or darken, may I be brought to feel that there can be no true sorrow or disquietude to the soul which has found its rest in the finished work of Jesus, and which has attained that blessed peace here which is the prelude of glory hereafter.

Give me grace to walk more closely with Thee in the time to come. Being forgiven much, may I love Thee all the more. May my life be one habitual effort of self and sin crucifixion, seeking to consecrate my soul's best energies to Him who is willing to "blot out as a thick cloud" all my transgressions. Overrule the discipline of Thy providence for promoting within me this death of sin, and this life of righteousness. Amid earth's manifold disquie-

tudes, its crosses and its losses, enable me with joy to look forward to that blessed hour when there shall be no more sin, and therefore no more sorrow —when every tear shall be wiped from every eye, and when I shall be permitted to know all that is comprehended in the holy beatitude, how "blessed" indeed are "the pure in heart," who are to "*see* God."

Direct, control, suggest, this day, all my designs and thoughts and actions, that every power of my body, and every faculty of my mind may unite in devotedness to Thy sole service and glory. And all I ask is for Jesus' sake. Amen.

"CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING-KINDNESS IN THE MORNING, FOR IN THEE DO I TRUST."

2D MORNING.

"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee."

"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."—Ps. li. 10.

For Renewal of Heart.

ALMIGHTY GOD, who hast mercifully preserved me during the unconscious hours of slumber, I desire to dedicate my waking moments and thoughts to Thee. Do Thou pre-occupy my mind with hallowed and heavenly things. May I be enabled throughout this day, by the help of Thy Holy Spirit, to exclude all that is vain and frivolous and sinful, and to have my affections centred on Thee, as my best portion and chiefest joy. As Thy Spirit of old did brood over the face of the waters, may that same blessed Spirit descend in all the plenitude of His heavenly graces, that the gloom of a deeper moral chaos may be dispersed, and that mine may be the beauty and happiness and glad-

ness of a soul that has been transformed "from darkness to light, and from the power of sin and Satan unto God."

Forbid, blessed Lord! that I should be resting in anything short of this new creation. May my old nature be crucified; and, as one alive from the dead, may I "walk with Jesus in newness of life." May the new life infused by Thy Spirit urge me to higher attainments and more heavenly aspirations. May I be enabled to see the world in its true light—its pleasures fading, its hopes delusive, its friendships perishable. May I be more solemnly and habitually impressed by the surpassing magnitude of "the things not seen." May I give evidence of the reality of a renewal of heart by a more entire and consistent dedication of the life. May my soul become a temple of the Holy Ghost; may "Holiness to the Lord" be its superscription. May I be led to feel that there can be no true joy but what

emanates from Thyself, the fountain and fulness of all joy—the God in whom "all my well-springs" are.

Whatever may be the discipline Thou art employing for this inward heart-transformation, let me be willing to submit to it. Let me lie passive in the arms of Thy mercy, saying, "Undertake Thou for me." May it be mine to bear all, and endure all, and rejoice in all—adoring a Father's hand, and trusting a Father's faithfulness—feeling secure in a Father's tried love.

Blessed Jesus! anew would I wash in the opened Fountain. The new heart, like every holy blessing I can ask, is the purchase of that blood which Thou didst so freely shed. May it be sprinkled on my guilty conscience. May I know ever what it is to be living on a living Saviour, bringing all-emptiness to all-fulness—the unworthiness of infinite demerit to the worthiness of all-sufficient, all-abounding, grace and mercy.

Do Thou shine upon my ways. May I this day get nearer heaven. May I feel at its close that I have done something for God—something to promote the great end for which existence was given me—the glory of Thy holy name. Bless all my beloved friends. Unite us together in bonds of holy fellowship here; and at last, in Thy presence, may we be permitted to drink together of the streams of everlasting love. And all I ask is for Jesus' sake. Amen.

"CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING-KINDNESS IN THE MORNING, FOR IN THEE DO I TRUST."

3D MORNING

"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee."

"I am the Lord that doth sanctify you."—Exod. xxxi. 13.

For Sanctifying Grace.

MOST blessed God, Thou hast permitted me in Thy great goodness to see the light of another day. May I be enabled to receive every returning morning as a fresh token of Thy love—a renewal of my lease of existence—a fresh grant of mercy from the Author of all being. May I seek, this day, and every day, to consecrate the life spared by Thy bounty more and more to Thy praise.

Lord, I come anew with my burden of sin. It is Thy marvellous forbearance that does not make every succeeding morning my last. I bless Thee that there is still the cleansing blood, the "Wonderful Counsellor," the all-gracious Spirit. Give me to know, ere I go forth into the world, what it is to

have the sense of Thy reconciled love. Whether in public or in private, in the intercourse of life or in the seclusion of solitude, may I realise Thy presence. May it be to me the sweetest and most blessed of all thoughts, that a covenant God is "compassing my path"—that by Him I am defended, guided, supported, —*safe!*

Heavenly Father, it is the unholiness of my heart which mars the joys of my communion with Thee. It is my especial prayer that Thou mayest impart largely to me of the sanctifying influences of Thy grace and Spirit. Let sin be crucified more and more. Let self be subjugated more and more. Under the transforming power of new affections, may God become all in all. May it be mine to know, in growing experience, the happiness of true holiness. May I jealously avoid all that is likely to estrange me from Thee, and zealously cultivate all that is calculated to draw

me nearer towards Thee. "Thy favour is life"—O shew me that to lose Thy favour is death indeed!

This blessed work of inward sanctification is Thine. Alas! I feel my constant proneness to wander from Thee, and to seek my happiness in the perishable. My best resolutions, how frail!—my warmest affections, how languid and lukewarm!—my holiest moments, how distracted with vain thoughts and worldly cares!—my whole life, how stained with sin! But do Thou strengthen me with all might by Thy Spirit, in the inner man. My daily cry would be, "More grace! More grace!" There is no sufficiency in myself; but has Thou not promised to make Thy grace sufficient? May I make it my grand ambition to be marking, day by day, my Zionward progress—my growing conformity to the holy character of a holy God.

For this end, overrule all the dispensations of Thy providence. May I hear

a voice in each of them proclaiming, "Be holy." May I be led to bear them all, and to rejoice in them all, if they thus be the means of bringing me nearer Thyself.

I commend to Thy fatherly protection all my beloved friends, and all for whom I ought to pray. "Sanctify them through Thy truth." May they all be presented unblamable before Thee in the day of Christ's appearing.

And may the grace of the Lord Jesus, and the love of God, and the communion and fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with me now and ever. Amen.

"CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING-KINDNESS IN THE MORNING, FOR IN THEE DO I TRUST."

4TH MORNING.

"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee."

"Hold Thou me up, and I shall be safe."—Ps. cxix 117.

For Support in Temptation.

MOST gracious God, give me grace to begin a new morning with Thee. Ere entering on the world, I invoke Thy blessing. Before I hear the voice of earthly friend, or mingle in earthly society, may I have a conscious filial nearness to Thee, my Father in heaven. O, Thou better, tenderer, dearer, than all on earth, give me the sweet assurance of Thy presence and favour. With this, all the day's joys will be joys indeed—with this, the sting will be extracted from the day's sorrows. In quiet confidence I will repose on Thy covenant faithfulness. I need no other benediction, Lord, if I have *Thine*. Other portions may fail me, but I am independent of all, if "Thou art the

strength of my heart, and my portion for ever."

I adore and bless Thy holy name for every past token of Thy kindness and forbearance. The retrospect of life is a retrospect of love. I am a wonder to myself that Thou hast spared me—that mercy is remembered when nothing but wrath is deserved. "Unless the Lord had been my help, my soul had long ere now dwelt in silence."

On that same arm I would desire still to lean. I am compassed about with a great fight of afflictions, and the sorest and saddest of all are my sins. But I fly to Thee, thou helper of the helpless. Give me to know what it is to dismiss all my own guilty misgivings, and to rest by simple faith on a tried Redeemer. It is mistrust of Him that has been the cause of many a bygone fall. I have been dwelling more on the strength of my temptations than on the strength of my Saviour. Oh, "hold

Thou me up, blessed Jesus! and I *shall* be safe." Whenever in the way of sin, give me to realise the all-sufficiency of Thy grace. May every hurricane of temptation drive me more under the shelter of the Rock. May the loss of every earthly prop lead me to Thyself —the only abiding refuge. No step in the wilderness-journey would I take without Thee. No loss would I mourn when sustained at Thy bidding. No enemy would I fear if Thou art on my side. Hold *Thou* me up, and then indeed I shall be safe—safe for time—safe for eternity.

And the same support I ask for myself, I beseech thee to vouchsafe to all near and dear to me. May the Lord God be their "sun and shield." May they experience no temptation "above what they are able to bear;" or, with the temptation, grant them grace that they may be able to bear it. And when all earthly dangers and toils and

trials are over, may we all be enabled to meet in glory, and trace there, with adoring gratitude and joy, the way in which *Thy* mercy through life "has held us up."

Anew I commend myself, body and soul, to Thee this day. For Thy dear Son's sake, forgive all my sins. My sole trust is in the atoning blood. May I feel this to be the best preservative against temptation and sin, that all I am, and all I have, is not my own, but belongs to the Lord who died for me. Hear these my unworthy supplications, and grant me an answer in peace, for His sake. Amen.

"CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING-KINDNESS IN THE MORNING, FOR IN THEE DO I TRUST."

5TH MORNING.

"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee."

"Though I walk in the midst of trouble, Thou wilt revive me."—Ps. cxxxviii. 7.

For Help in Trouble.

MOST blessed Lord, who hast again permitted me to approach a throne of grace, do Thou this day shine into my heart. Anew may I enter on another day's duties and trials, with a soul calm and peaceful amid all other disquietudes, by being at peace with Thee.

I bless Thee that I can ever "sing of mercy" as well as of "judgment." Thy dealings might have been all in unmixed wrath, but the severest of them are tempered with gracious love. Oh that they may have their designed effect of driving me to the only true rest for the soul, in the bosom of its God! May the breaking of cistern by cistern only endear to me the more the great Fountain-head.

How often dost Thou send tribulations, that Thy people may see more of Thy gracious hand! How often, when the waters are troubled, do we recognize the presence of the great Covenant-angel himself, and experience the plenitude of His upholding grace and mercy! Lord, my earnest prayer is, that every trial may serve to unfold to me more of the preciousness of Jesus. As prop by prop, which was wont to support me on earth, may be giving way, may I know what it is to lean my whole weight *upon* Him, and leave my whole case *with* Him, repairing to Him as the friend that "sticketh closer than any brother" —into His sympathizing bosom to confide my every want—from His inexhaustible treasury to draw every consolation —and on His upholding arm confidingly and habitually to rest.

What, O blessed Saviour, are my troubles to Thine! What are my bitterest tears and most aching heart in

comparison with what Thou didst so freely endure for me! May the remembrance of this *Thy* fellowship in *my* suffering, and *my* fellowship in *Thine*, reconcile me patiently to endure whatsoever Thou seest meet to lay upon me. Give me grace ever to see that my bitterest trial is my sin, that my heaviest cross is the cross of my wandering treacherous heart. When I think of that blessed time when God shall terminate the tears of a weeping world, may this be my loftiest ground of rejoicing—that there will be then no more sin to cause them.

Humbly I would lie at my Saviour's feet, disowning all trust save in Him—exulting in His finished work, and meritorious righteousness, and all-prevalent intercession. I rejoice to think of the redeemed multitude before His throne, "whom no man can number," and to feel that His ability and willingness "to save unto the uttermost" are still the same.

Command, O Lord, Thy richest blessing this day on all whom I love. May all my relatives be related to Thee in the common bonds of the gospel. Though separated by distance from each other on life's highway, may we enjoy the consolation that we are all treading the same invisible road Zionward — that earth's dearest and tenderest ties will, at the end of the chequered journey, be strengthened and perpetuated in the full vision and fruition of Thee our God.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus, and the love of God, and the fellowship and communion of the Holy Ghost, be with me this day and ever. Amen.

"CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING-KINDNESS IN THE MORNING, FOR IN THEE DO I TRUST."

6TH MORNING.

"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee."

"Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me, for I am desolate and afflicted."—Ps. xxv. 16.

For Comfort in Bereavement.

O GOD, I come to Thee this morning, rejoicing in the simple but sublime assurance that "the Lord reigneth." Thy judgments are often "a great deep." May it be mine ever to own Thy sovereignty, and to rest satisfied with the assurance, "He hath done all things well."

It is indeed my comfort to know that "my times" are not in my own hands, but in Thine. When in vain I seek to explain the mystery of Thy inscrutable doings, may I be enabled implicitly to trust Thine unswerving rectitude and faithfulness. The kindest and best of earthly parents may err—they may be betrayed into unnecessary harshness and

severity—but Thou, O unerring Parent, wilt not, and canst not, inflict one unneeded stroke. I can own Thy wisdom where I cannot discern it. I can trust the footsteps of love where I cannot trace them.

I look back with adoring wonder on all Thy marvellous dealings towards me in the past. "When my foot slipped, Thy mercy, O Lord, held me up." How many tear-drops have been dried by Thee! How many sorrows have been soothed by thee! How many dangers have been averted by Thee! Instead of wondering at my trials, I have rather reason to marvel at Thy forbearance. What are my heaviest afflictions in comparison with the deserts of sin? Lord, if they had been in proportion to my guilt, I could not have had one hour of joy.

Give me grace not only to bear all, and to endure all, but to glory in all which Thy chastening love sees meet to appoint. Affliction is Thine own ap-

pointed training-school for immortality. If I need such training, Lord, withhold it not. Rather subject me to the severest ordeal of fatherly discipline, than leave me to vex Thee more with my guilty departures and backsliding. I will confide in the tenderness of Thy dealings—that Thou wilt conduct me by no rougher path than is really needful. Thou hast given Thy Son for me! After *such* a pledge of Thy love, may it never be mine to breathe one murmuring word.

For all in sorrow, Lord, I pray that they may take their sorrows to the "Man of sorrows." May they be willing to forget their own light afflictions as they behold His bleeding wounds. Blessed God, what a source of joy to the whole family of the afflicted, that the exalted Head and elder Brother has Himself tasted sorrow's bitterest cup! Lord Jesus, Thou who hast suffered so much for me, grant that by patience and un-

repining submission I may be enabled to "glorify thee in the fires."

All my beloved friends I commit to Thy care. May the Lord be their everlasting portion. Forbid that I should have to mourn in them what would be bitterer than the pang of all earthly bereavement—that they are bereft of Thy favour. Make them Thine, and in the midst of life's vicissitudes and changes, may we all look forward to that better time, and that better world, where sorrow and sighing shall for ever flee away. And all I ask is for Jesus' sake. Amen.

"CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING-KINDNESS IN THE MORNING, FOR IN THEE DO TRUST."

7TH MORNING

"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee."

"Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness."—Ps. cxii. 4.

For Light in Darkness.

ETERNAL, everlasting God, I bless Thee for the privilege of access into Thy presence. What am I—a guilty, unworthy sinner, deserving only of condemnation—that I should be permitted, with holy boldness, to approach the footstool of Thy throne, and call Thee "my Father in heaven!"

I rejoice to know, when "my heart is overwhelmed, and in "perplexity," that I can ever look unto Thee as a "Rock that is higher than I"--that, amid all the ebbings and flowings in the tide of my own fitful frames and feelings, Thou, great Rock of ages, remainest fixed and immovable. Thou hast never failed me in the past. When "deep has

been calling to deep," and many "waves and billows have gone over me," "the Lord has commanded His loving-kindness in the day-time, and in the night His song has been with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life." And I will trust Thee in the future. In the midst of baffling and mysterious providences I will be still—hushing every murmur, and breathing in lowly resignation the prayer, "divinely taught," "Thy will be done."

It is my comfort to know that the darkest cloud is fringed with covenant love. I can repose in the blessed assurance that *present* discipline is *needed* discipline, and that all which is mystery now will be cleared up hereafter. May it be mine cheerfully to follow the footsteps of the guiding Shepherd through the darkest, loneliest road, and amidst thickening sorrows may I have grace to say, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

Lord, increase my faith—let it rise above all difficulties and all trials. Let these drive me closer to Him who has promised to make me "more than conqueror." Let them quicken my longings for the true home of my soul above. May it be my grand ambition here to be a "pilgrim" in everything—to be pitching my tent day by day nearer heaven, imbibing every day more of the pilgrim character, and longing more for the pilgrim's rest. May I be enabled to say, with an increasingly chastened spirit, of a passing world, "Here I have no continuing city." May this assurance dry all tears, and reconcile to all sorrows—"I am journeying unto the place of which the Lord hath said, I will give it you."

Blessed Jesus, hasten Thy coming and Thy kingdom. Scatter the darkness which is now covering heathen nations. Stand by Thy missionary servants. May they exercise a simple faith on Thine

own sure word of promise. "Strong in the Lord and in the power of His might," may every mountain of difficulty be made a plain, and "the glory of the Lord be revealed."

God of Bethel, I commend to Thee all my beloved friends. Shield them by Thy protecting providence. Give them every needed blessing in the present life, and in the world to come life everlasting. And all I ask is for Jesus' sake. Amen.

"CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING-KINDNESS IN THE MORNING, FOR IN THEE DO I TRUST."

8TH MORNING.

"Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee."

"Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God."—Ps. xliii. 5.

For Hope in Discouragement

O GOD, in Thine infinite mercy Thou hast again spared me to approach Thy blessed presence. May each morning find me better prepared for the glorious waking-time of immortality, when "the day shall break," and earth's shadows shall for ever "flee away." May I seek to rise this day in newness of life, breathing more of the atmosphere of holiness, and partaking more of the character of heaven.

Thou art ever, by the salutary dispensations of Thy providence, reminding me that "earth is not my rest." It is well, Lord, that it should be so; that, by Thine own gracious and needed discipline, the world be disarmed of its insinuating power and I be weaned from

what is precarious at the best, and which ultimately *must* perish.

O my God, I feel heavily burdened by reason of sin. I mourn my guilty proneness to temptation. How anything and everything seems often enough to drive me from thee, and to lead me to seek my happiness in created good, rather than in Thyself, the infinite fountain of all excellence! How sad have been my backslidings!—how have solemn vows been broken!—how have abandoned and forsworn sins threatened again to have dominion over me! How little tenderness of conscience has there been!—how little dread of an uneven walk! How often, on the heart which I have consecrated to Thee as an altar for the perpetual sacrifice of praise, and gratitude, and love, has there been burning incense to strange gods!

Lord, when I look to my inner self, I have good cause indeed for misgivings and despondency. Conscience repeats,

over and over again, a sentence of condemnation, and I have nought to extenuate my guilt or palliate my sin. Whither can I flee? Where can I look but to Thee, O Lamb of God, thou sin-bearing and sin-forgiving Saviour!

Enable me to be living more from moment to moment on Thy grace—to rely on Thy guiding arm with more childlike confidence—to look with a more simple faith to Thy finished work, disowning all trust in my own doings, and casting myself, as a poor needy pensioner, on the bounty of Him who hath done all, and suffered all, and endured all, for me. Thus relying on the unseen arm of a covenant-God, when the hour of darkness and discouragement overtakes me—when trials multiply, and comforts fail, and streams of earthly blessings are dried up—may I have what compensates for the loss of all, "*Thy* favour, which is life, and Thy loving-kindness, which is better than life." "I

will go in the strength of the Lord God." "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

Be the God of all near and dear to me. May all my relatives be able to claim a spiritual relationship with Thee, that so those earthly bonds of attachment, which sooner or later must snap asunder here, may be renewed and perpetuated before the throne.

Compassionate all who are in sorrow. Comfort the feeble-minded. May "the joy of the Lord be their strength." May valuable lives be prolonged. May those appointed unto death be prepared for their great change. And all I ask is for Jesus' sake. Amen.

"CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING-KINDNESS IN THE MORNING, FOR IN THEE DO TRUST."

9TH MORNING.

"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee."

"Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk, for I lift up my soul unto Thee."—Ps. cxliii. 8.

For Wisdom in Perplexity.

O ETERNAL LORD, whose nature and whose name is love, I bless Thee that I am again invited into Thy presence. What am I, that I should be permitted to speak to the infinite God! I might have been left through eternity a monument of Thy righteous vengeance. I might have known Thee only as "the consuming fire." But "Thy ways are not as man's ways;" mercy is remembered when wrath might have come upon me to the uttermost.

I desire to begin this day, blessing and praising Thee for "Thine unspeakable gift," Jesus the Son of Thy love. Adored be Thy name, that the guilt of my sin, which the holiness of Thy law

could not suffer otherwise to be cancelled, has to Him been transferred—that, as the scape-goat of His people, He has borne the mighty load into the land of oblivion, never more to be remembered. May I be enabled to shew forth my lively gratitude to Thee for this wondrous token of Thy love, not only by lip homage, but by heart and life devotion. Sanctify and seal me in body, soul, and spirit; and present me at last "faultless before the presence of Thy glory with exceeding joy."

O my God, I rejoice to know that my interests for time and eternity are confided to Thy keeping. Though often "wonderful in council," Thou art ever "excellent in working." Thou art "God only wise"—"righteous in all Thy ways, and holy in all Thy works." I commit my way and my doings unto Thee. "Hold *Thou* me up, and I shall be safe." May I trust Thy wisdom and faithfulness, even amid crosses and losses, and

frowning providences. Make them all work together for my good.

If my path be in any way now hedged up with thorns, "undertake Thou for me." "Guide me with Thy counsel." Let me take no step, and engage in no plan, unsanctioned by Thine approval. Let it be my grand aim and ambition, in all the changes of a changing life, to hear Thy directing voice, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it;" and then shall all life's trials be sweetened, and life's burden lightened, by knowing that they are the appointment of infinite wisdom and unchanging love, and that, though man may err, God never can.

May the Holy Spirit lead me this day into all the truth. May all its duties be pervaded by the leavening power of vital godliness. While *in* the world, may I seek to feel and to exhibit that I am not *of* it. May I give evidence, in my walk and conversation, of a renewed nature, and of a nobler destiny.

Hasten, blessed Jesus, Thy coming and Thy kingdom. "How long shall the wicked triumph?" "Save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance; feed them also, and lift them up for ever."

Let the voice of salvation be heard in the households of all I love. May theirs be the dwellings of the righteous. May this be their name, "The Lord is there." May they know Him who hath said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."

And "now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee." Hear and answer these unworthy supplications, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

"CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING-KINDNESS IN THE MORNING FOR IN THEE DO I TRUST."

10TH MORNING.

"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee."

"My strength is made perfect in weakness."—2 Cor. xii. 9.

For Strength in Weakness.

O THOU high and mighty God, inhabiting eternity, do Thou draw near unto a poor unworthy sinner, who ventures anew this morning to approach the footstool of Thy throne. Vouchsafe me now the gracious aids of Thy gracious Spirit, that out of much weakness I may be made strong. It is Thine own gracious assurance, that "they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." I would rely on the faithfulness of a promising God. May my own utter emptiness drive me to all fulness. May my own conscious weakness wean me from all earthly props, and confidences, and refuges, to "abide under the shadow of the Almighty."

Lord, I confess this day with shame

and confusion of face my manifold infirmities, my coldness and lukewarmness, my distrust of Thy providence, my insensibility to Thy love, my murmuring at thy dealings, my tampering with sin, my resisting of Thy grace. How often, like the slender reed, have I bent before the blast of temptation, my best resolutions proving "as the morning cloud and the early dew!"

And yet, gracious Father, Thou hast not broken "the bruised reed"—Thou hast not "quenched the smoking flax." I am here this morning a marvel to my self that Thou art still sparing me. "Thy ways are not as man's ways." Had it been so, Thou wouldest long since have grown weary. But it is the prerogative of the everlasting God that "*He* fainteth not, neither is weary." Thou art this morning giving me fresh grants of mercy, renewed proofs and tokens of unmerited love. I am receiving "at the Lord's hand double for all my sins."

I rejoice to know, blessed Jesus, that it is Thy burdened ones Thou hast specially promised "gently to lead." Thou wilt conduct me by no rougher road than is necessary. "Undertake Thou for me." May the wilderness journey be this day resumed and renewed with a more simple, and child-like, and habitual leaning on Thee. Do Thou put this new song into my mouth, "The Lord is my Rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust." Say unto me, in the midst of my weakness, "Fear not, thou worm Jacob." With the pillar of Thy presence ever before me, "I will go from strength to strength."

Keep me this day from sin. May no evil thoughts, or vain imaginings, or deceitful lusts, obtrude on my walk with God. May an affecting sense of how frail I am, keep me near the atoning sacrifice. May the "horns of

the altar" ever be in sight. Blessed Jesus, my helpless soul would hang every moment upon Thee.

Look down in Thy kindness on all connected with me by ties of earthly kindred. May the blessing of the God of Bethel rest on every heart and household I love. May we all be journeying Zionwards, and be so weaned from earth as to feel that Zionwards is homewards. If pursuing different paths, and separated, it may be, far from one another, may the journey have one blessed and happy termination. May we meet in glory, and meet with Thee. And all I ask is for the Redeemer's sake. Amen.

"CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING-KINDNESS IN THE MORNING, FOR IN THEE DO I TRUST."

11TH MORNING.

"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee."

"What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits towards me?"—Ps. cxvi. 12.

For Gratitude for Mercies.

O GOD, I adore Thee as the Author and Giver of every good and every perfect gift. Thou art daily loading me with thy benefits. Every returning morning brings with it fresh causes for gratitude—new material for praise. I bless Thee for Thy temporal bounties—"how great has been the sum of them!" While others have been pining in poverty, or wasted by sickness, or racked in pain, or left friendless and portionless, Thou hast been making showers of blessing to fall around my dwelling. I laid me down last night and slept—I awaked, for the Lord sustained me. I might never have seen the morning light. Mine might have been the midnight summons to meet a God in whose

righteous presence I was all unmeet and unprepared to stand. And yet I am again spared a monument of Thy goodness. Oh, do Thou enkindle a flame of undying gratitude to Thee, on the clay-cold altar of my heart. I mourn and lament that I am so little and so feebly affected by the magnitude of Thy mercies, and especially by the riches of Thy grace and love manifested in Jesus ;—that my affections are so little alive to the incalculable obligation under which I am laid to Him who hath "loved me with an everlasting love." I am doubly Thine. Creation and redemption combine in claiming all I am, and all I have, for Thee and Thy service. Good Lord, preserve me from the sin of insensibility to Thine unwearied kindness—of taking Thy mercies as matters of course, and thus living in a state of independence of Thee. May my whole existence become a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving—may all my doings testify the

sincerity and devotion of a heart feelingly alive to every gift of the great Giver; and, especially, may I be so brought under the constraining influence of redeeming love, as to consecrate every power of my body and every faculty of my soul to Him who so willingly consecrated and shed His very life's blood for me.

Lord, this day shine upon me with the light of Thy countenance; may every mercy I experience in the course of it be hallowed and sweetened by the thought that it comes from God. And while ever mindful and thankful in the midst of present mercies, teach me to keep in view the crowning mercy of all —the hope of at last sharing Thy presence and full fruition, and of joining in the eternal ascription with the ransomed multitude above, who cease not day nor night to celebrate Thy praises.

Bless all near and dear to me. Defend them by thy mighty power. Give

them, too, gratitude for mercies past, and the sure and well-grounded hope of a glorious inheritance in that better world, where mercy is unmixed with judgment, and joy undarkened by sorrow. And all I ask is for Jesus' sake. Amen.

"CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING-KINDNESS IN THE MORNING, FOR IN THEE DO I TRUST."

12TH MORNING.

"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee."

"I die daily."—1 Cor. xv. 31.

For Crucifixion of Sin.

HEAVENLY FATHER, who hast permitted me, in Thy great mercy, to see the light of another day, enable me to begin and to end it with Thee. Let all my thoughts and purposes and actions have the superscription written on them —"Holiness to the Lord."

Give me to know the blessedness of reconciliation—what it is, as a sinner, and the chief of sinners, to come "just as I am, without one plea," to that blood "which cleanseth from all sin." I desire to take hold of the sublime assurance, that Jesus is "able to save unto the uttermost"—that He has left nothing for me as a suppliant at Thy throne—a pensioner on Thy bounty—but to accept

all as the gift and purchase of free, unmerited grace.

While I look to Him as my Saviour from the *penalty*, may I know Him also as my Deliverer from the *power* of sin. I have to lament that so often I have yielded to its solicitations—that my heart, a temple of the Holy Ghost, has been so often profaned and dishonoured by the "accursed thing," marring my spiritual joy, and sorely interrupting communion with the Lord I love. Give me grace to exercise a godly jealousy over my traitor affections—to live nearer Thee—to have the magnet of my heart more centred on Thyself—to keep the eye of faith more steadily on Jesus—to live more habitually under "the powers of the world to come." Thou knowest my *besetting* sin—the plague of my heart, which so often leads to a guilty estrangement. Lord, cut down this root of bitterness. Let me nail it to Thy cross. Let me be ever on the watch-

tower, ready to resist the first assault of the enemy. Let it be to me at once a precept and a promise—"Sin shall not have dominion over you." O shew me that my strength to repel temptation is in Jesus alone. Put me in the cleft of the rock when the hurricane is passing by. May I be as willing to surrender all for my Saviour—my heart sins and life sins—as He willingly surrendered His all for me. May I be enabled to say, "Lord, I am Thine."

Every idol I utterly abolish. Save me, blessed Saviour, from a deceitful heart and a seductive world. Let me see more and more the beauties of holiness. Let me ever be basking in the rays of Thy love—approaching nearer and nearer Thee, thou "Sun of my soul." May Thy loveliness and glory eclipse all created beams, and may I look forward with bounding heart to that time when all that helps to lighten up earth's pathway shall be obscured in

the shadow of death, and I shall be ushered into the glories of that better and brighter scene, where "the sun shall no more go down, neither shall the moon withdraw itself, but where the Lord my God shall be my everlasting light."

And what I ask for myself, I desire in behalf of those near and dear to me. Do thou "sanctify them wholly." May they, too, crucify sin, and "die daily." May this be the happy history of all of us — "Being made free from sin, and having become the servants of God, we have our fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." Amen.

"CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING-KINDNESS IN THE MORNING, FOR IN THEE DO I TRUST."

13TH MORNING.

"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee."

"Grow in grace."—2 Pet. iii. 18.

For Growth in Holiness.

O GOD, draw near to me in Thy great mercy. Another peaceful morning has dawned upon me. May it be mine to know the happiness of those who walk all the day in the light of Thy countenance.

O thou best and kindest of beings, teach me to know, amid the smiles and the frowns, the joys and the sorrows, of an ever-changing world, what it is to have an unchanging refuge and portion in Thee. I can mourn no blank, I can feel no solitude, when I have Thy presence and love. If I have nought beside—stripped and denuded of every other blessing—I have the richest of all, if I be at peace with God.

I desire to dwell with devout contemplation on the infinite loveliness of Thy moral nature. Lord, I long to have this guilty, erring soul, moulded and fashioned in increasing conformity to Thy blessed mind and will. Let my great concern henceforth be, to love and serve and please Thee more and more. May all Thy dealings with me, of whatever kind they be, contribute in promoting this growth in holiness. May prosperity draw forth a perpetual thank-offering of praise for unmerited mercies. May adversity purify away the dross of worldliness and sin. May every day be finding the power of sin weaker and weaker, and the dominion of grace stronger and stronger. Living under the powers of a world to come, may I look forward with joyful expectation to the time when sin shall no longer impede my spiritual growth—when Satan shall be disarmed of his power, and my own heart of its deceitfulness—when

every faculty of a glorified and exalted nature shall be enlisted in Thy service in a world of eternal joy.

O thou blessed Advocate within the veil—Thou who art even now interceding for Thy tried and tempted saints, "that their faith fail not"—do Thou impart unto me a constant supply of Thy promised grace. Not only sprinkle my heart with Thy blood, but conquer it by Thy love. Fill me with deep contrition for an erring past—inspire me with purposes of new obedience for the future. May I know, in my sweet experience, that "Thy yoke is easy and Thy burden light"—that, growing in holiness, I am growing in happiness too. Give me an increasing tenderness of conscience about sin—lead me, with more filial devotedness, to cultivate a holy fear of offending so gracious a Father. Habitually realizing my new covenant relationship to Thee, may I ever be ready to exclaim, with joyful

sincerity, "O Lord, truly I am Thy servant!"

Revive, blessed God, Thine own work everywhere. "Take unto Thee Thy great power, and reign." Remove all hardness and blindness of heart—all contempt of Thy Word. May it have free course and be glorified.

Bless my dear friends. However far separated from one another, we can ever meet at the same throne of the heavenly grace, pleading the same "exceeding great and precious promises." May we all be following the same path of grace now, and meet amid the endless joys of glory hereafter. And all I ask is for Jesus' sake. Amen.

"CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING-KINDNESS IN THE MORNING, FOR IN THEE DO I TRUST."

14TH MORNING

"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee."

"Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world."—1 John v. 4.

For Victory over the World.

O ETERNAL, everlasting God, Thou art glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, continually doing wonders. Heaven and earth are full of the majesty of Thy glory. Thou, the almighty keeper of Israel, never slumberest. There is not the moment I am away from Thy wakeful vigilance. In the defenceless hours of sleep, as well as amid life's activities and toils, Thou art ever the same—"compassing my path and my lying down, and intimately acquainted with all my ways."

I rejoice to think that I have the assurance of such unwearying watchfulness and care, in a world "lying in wickedness." Blessed Jesus, in the world Thou hast forewarned me to ex-

pect tribulation, but nevertheless, I will "be of good cheer, for Thou hast overcome the world." Thou hast traversed its wilderness-depths—Thou hast passed through the shadow of its darkest valley. I cannot dread what Thou hast trodden and conquered.

But, alas! I have to mourn that the world which crucified Thee should be so much loved by me—that its pleasures should be so fascinating—its pursuits so engrossing. Wean me from it. Break its alluring spell. Strip it of its counterfeit charms. Discover to me its hollowness—the treachery of its promises—the precariousness of its best blessings—the fleeting nature of its most enduring friendships. I take comfort in the thought, "The Lord God is a sun and shield." The world has deceived me, but Thou never hast. Guide me by Thy counsel. Saviour-God, let me come up from the wilderness leaning on Thine arm, exulting, amid its legion-foes, that

greater is He that is with me than all they that can be against me.

O Thou who, in Thy last prayer on earth, didst so touchingly say of Thy pilgrim people, "These are in the world," do Thou still bend Thy pitying eye upon me, as I travel, burdened with sin and sorrow, through the valley of tears. Do Thou so "sanctify me through Thy truth," that, though *in* the world, I may not be *of* it—not conformed to its sinful practices and lying vanities. Bring me to say, with regard to all in it that was once so fascinating, "My soul is even as a weaned child." With my face Zionwards, may I declare plainly that I seek "a better country."

Grant that this day, in all my worldly intercourse, I may have the realizing sense of Thy presence and nearness. May I set a watch on my heart, and keep the door of my lips. May cherished feelings of love and devotedness to Thee be intermingled with all life's

duties and engagements. May I know that a simple faith in Jesus is the great secret of victory over the world. Oh, may the trembling magnet of my vacillating affections be ever pointing to Him, and then I shall be made "more than conqueror."

Through His all-prevailing merits and advocacy, hear my prayer. In His most precious blood, forgive all my sins. By His indwelling grace, sanctify my nature, that my whole body, soul, and spirit, may be preserved blameless until His coming. Amen.

"CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING-KINDNESS IN THE MORNING, FOR IN THEE DO I TRUST."

15TH MORNING.

"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee."

"Search me, O God, and know my heart."—
Ps. cxxxix. 23.

For Deeper Views of Self.

O ETERNAL, everlasting God, who hast once more enlightened my eyes, and suffered me not to sleep the sleep of death, bestow upon me this day the riches of Thy grace and love. Morning after morning is dawning upon me, with new tokens of Thy mercy. Oh, may these be bringing me nearer the glorious day which is to know no night—that eternal noon-tide, when all shadows and darkness are for ever to flee away!

Lord, I am unworthy to come into Thy presence, and yet I have to mourn that I do not feel this deep unworthiness as I ought. I am unwilling to see into the unknown depths of my sin. I do

not know myself. I have no depressing consciousness of the desperate wickedness of my own evil heart. I have buried many bypast transgressions in oblivion. I have deluded myself with the thought, that many were too trivial and unimportant to incur Thy disapproval. Even any imperfect good which Thy grace has enabled me to perform I have been too prone to take the merit to myself, instead of ascribing all the praise to Thee. There has been pride in my humility. There have been mingled motives in my best services. My best resolutions have been fitful and transient. My purest and most disinterested actions could not stand the scrutiny of thine eye. The holiest day I ever spent, were I to be judged by it, would condemn me.

O Thou who "searchest Jerusalem with lighted candles," do Thou "search my heart." Bring me to the publican's place of penitential sorrow, exclaiming,

in self-renouncing humility, "God be merciful to me a sinner!"

I would seek to make a more entire and undivided surrender of all I am and have to Thee. Give me such an awful and affecting sense of my vileness, that I may never feel safe but when close by the atoning Fountain, drawing out of it hourly supplies. May mine be a daily heart and self and sin crucifixion—an eternal severance from those bosom traitors which have so long separated between me and my God. Make me more zealous for Thy honour and glory—"Cleanse Thou the thoughts of my heart, by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit"—"Let no iniquity obtain dominion over me." But may it be my daily ambition to become more like to Thee, reflecting more of the image, and imbibing more of the spirit, of my Divine Redeemer, that thus the atmosphere of holiness and of heaven may be diffused all around me. May my own soul be

pervaded with lofty and purified aspirations. May I be enabled to exhibit to the world the felt happiness of close walking with God.

And do Thou, gracious Father, "send forth Thy light and Thy truth" to a darkened world. May Thine own ancient people be speedily gathered in with the fulness of the Gentile nations, that all the ends of the earth may see the salvation of God.

Bless all my dear friends, near or distant. May they have the heritage of those that fear Thy name. Defend them now by Thy mighty power, and at last number them with Thy saints in glory everlasting. Amen.

"CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING KINDNESS IN THE MORNING, FOR IN THEE DO I TRUST,"

16TH MORNING.

"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee."

"That I may know HIM."—Phil. iii. 10.

For Brighter Views of Jesus.

BLESSED JESUS!—Sun of my soul!—Light of my life!—do Thou shine upon me this morning with the "brightness of Thy rising." May I enjoy this day union and communion with Thee. May a sense of Thy favour pervade all its duties, sanctify its blessings, and lighten its trials. May it be to me the sweetest and holiest of all thoughts, that Thou art ever with me--that, though unseen to the eye of sense, the eye of faith can discern Thy gracious presence and the manifestations of Thy nearness and Love. May the realised assurance, that Thou art thus at my side, dispel every misgiving, and dry every tear. May I hear Thee, even now, saying unto me, "Lo, I am with you"—I

am with you now— I shall be with you "alway"—and when the world is ended "I will" that you "be with me where I am, that you may behold my glory!"

O adorable Saviour, how sadly is Thy beauty obscured from my view, by reason of my own sin! How feebly do I apprehend the mystery of Thy love—the glories of Thy person—the perfection of Thine atonement! Hide me in the clefts of the rock, and while there, "I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory." May every fresh glimpse of "the great love wherewith thou hast loved me" rebuke the lukewarmness of my own. May I covet a closer walk with Thee. May my existence be one continued Emmaus journey— its hours passing joyously by because happy in the presence and converse of a risen Redeemer. Blessed Jesus, "abide with me," for the day is "far spent." Let me walk with Thee in newness of life. May I breathe Thy spirit of holy submission—of cheerful

obedience—of patience under injuries. May I not repine at bearing the cross, so meekly borne for me; nor murmur at my trials, when I think of Thine. May I be enabled to make every lineament of Thy spotless character my daily study, so as gradually to be transformed into the same image from glory to glory—looking forward to that blessed time when I shall see Thee without one stain of remaining sin to dim the contemplation, and when I shall be permitted to bathe in the ocean of Thine eternal love.

I thank Thee for the mercies of the bypast night. Give me to reckon every new day a fresh gift of Thy dying grace—to regard all its hours as redeemed hours—every moment as "bought with a price." May these days, and hours, and moments, thus stamped with the cross, be consecrated more than ever to Thy praise.

Again I beseech Thee, "abide with me." "Where Thou goest I will go;

and where Thou dwellest I will dwell." Abide with me from morning to evening, and from evening to morning again. "Without Thee I cannot live"—"without Thee I dare not die." Living or dying, Lord, I would seek to be Thine.

Forgive all my many sins, and when the feeble glimpses of a feeble love on earth are at an end, bring me at last to enjoy brighter views of Thee in glory everlasting. Amen.

"CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING-KINDNESS IN THE MORNING, FOR IN THEE DO I TRUST."

17TH MORNING

"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee."

"They shall behold the land that is very far off."—Isaiah xxxvi. 17.

For Nearer Views of Heaven.

O GOD, in the multitude of Thy mercies I am again permitted to see the light of a new day. With another rising morn do Thou scatter all the clouds of sin and unbelief from my soul. Unfold to my view bright glimpses of Thyself—sweet foretastes of those joys which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard."

Here, Lord, I have "no continuing city"—change is my portion in this the house of my pilgrimage—"I would not live always." I am "willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord." Wean me from this uncertain world. Bring me to live under the powers of a world to come. I rejoice to think of the happy myriads

already in glory—"clothed in white robes, with palms in their hands"—safe in the presence of the Master they love, with every tear-drop wiped away. I rejoice to know that the blood and grace to which they owe their crowns are still free as ever. Oh, may I be enabled, with some good measure of triumphant assurance, to say, "Henceforth there is laid up for *me* a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day." May the thought of that endless, sinless, sorrowless immortality reconcile me to all earth's severest discipline. Let me not murmur under the heaviest cross in the prospect of such a crown. Let me not refuse to pass cheerfully through the hottest furnace which is to refine and purify me for this "exceeding weight of glory;" but bear with calm equanimity whatever Thou seest meet to lay upon me. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

Lord, grant that the approach of eternity may urge me to greater diligence in Thy service. May I have my loins girded and my lamp burning. May I spend each day, and this day, as if it were to be my last. When the shadows of evening gather around me, may I feel that I have spent a day for God. Nearer a dying hour—may it find me nearer heaven.

What I ask for myself I would seek in behalf of all my beloved friends. Sprinkle each heart with the blood of the covenant. May every eye be directed to Jesus, and every footstep be pointing heavenward. Though severed from one another now, may we not be found gathered in different bundles on the great reaping-day of judgment.

Lord, unite Thine own people more and more. Why should we be guilty of such sad estrangements, crossing and recrossing one another on life's highway with alien and jealous looks, when pro-

fessing to be sprinkled with the same blood, to bear the same name, and be heirs of the same inheritance? Let me live near to Jesus, and then I shall live near all His people, looking forward to that blessed time when we shall see eye to eye and heart to heart—no jarring or discordant note to mar the everlasting ascription of "blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever." Amen.

"CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING-KINDNESS IN THE MORNING, FOR IN THEE DO I TRUST."

18TH MORNING.

"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee."

"There is none upon earth that I desire besides Thee."—Ps. lxxiii. 25.

For Weanedness from the Creature.

O LORD, thou blessed fountain of all happiness and joy, do Thou draw near to me this morning in Thy great mercy. All creature-comforts are emanations from Thee. Thy favour is life—Thy displeasure is worse than death. In losing Thee we lose our all—in having Thee, we can want nothing.

I have to acknowledge, with shame and confusion of face, that I have not thus been seeking my true enjoyment in Thee. I have been in pursuit of fleeting shadows, which one by one have eluded my grasp. I have been worshipping and serving the creature more than the Creator, who is "God over all, blessed for evermore." Lord, bring me

to see that nothing short of Thyself can satisfy the longings and desires of my immortal nature. Wean me from what is perishable. Let me reverentially acquiesce in whatever means Thou mayest employ to bring my wandering heart back to Thee, O thou alone-satisfying portion of my soul. Rather, Lord, would I submit to the hardest discipline than listen to the withering words, "Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone." Let me feel that Thy presence and love can compensate for the loss of all earthly joys. As prop after prop which has gladdened my pilgrimage totters and falls, may I know what it is to "dwell in the secret place of the Most High, and to abide under the shadow of the Almighty." As Thou art ever proclaiming over creature-confidence, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," may I know what it is to cleave to One who is better and surer than the nearest and dearest on

earth—the Friend that never fails, and never wearies, and never dies—"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever."

Blessed Saviour, I devolve my every care on Thee. Thou art noting now on the throne the pangs and sorrows of every burdened heart. All other love is imperfect. All other sympathy is selfish but Thine. May my affections be consecrated to Thee. May it be my joy to serve Thee—my privilege to follow Thee, and, if need be, to suffer with Thee. May every cross lose its bitterness by having Thee at my side. May I feel that nothing but absence from Thee can create a real blank in my heart. Thy presence takes the sting from all afflictions, and imparts security in the midst of all troubles. Living or dying, may I be Thine.

Sprinkle me this new morning with the blood of the covenant. May I feel all throughout the day the joy of

being reconciled to God. May my heart be made a little sanctuary of praise. May I breathe the atmosphere of heaven. May God himself be so enthroned in my affections, that I may be enabled to say, in comparison with Him, of all that the world can give, "There is none upon the earth that I desire besides Thee."

Heavenly Father, I leave all that belongs to me to Thee—"Undertake Thou for them." Bless them and make them blessings. "Hide them under the shadow of Thy wings" until earth's "calamities be overpast." Hear this my morning supplication; and when thou hearest, forgive. And all I ask is for Jesus' sake. Amen.

"CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING KINDNESS IN THE MORNING, FOR IN THEE DO I TRUST."

19TH MORNING.

"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee."

"He giveth grace unto the humble."—1 Pet. v. 5.

For Lowliness of Mind.

O GOD, Thou art "the high and the lofty One who inhabiteth eternity." There is no being truly great but Thee. All other excellence and glory is derived —Thine is underived. All else is finite —Thine is infinite. The burning seraph nearest Thy throne is the humblest of all Thy creatures, because he gets the nearest view of the majesty of Thy glory.

Lord, fill my soul this morning with suitable views of Thy greatness, and a humbling estimate of my own nothingness. I would lie low at Thy feet—in wonder and amazement that dust and ashes should be permitted to approach that Being whom angels worship with folded wings, and in whose sight the

very "heavens are not clean." Repress every proud, self-glorying imagination. Let me feel I cannot abase myself enough in Thy presence. "Lord, I am vile; what can I answer Thee?" My best thoughts, how polluted!—my best services, how imperfect!—my best affections, how lukewarm!—my best prayers, how cold!—my best hours, were I judged by them, how would I be condemned!

I desire to take refuge at the cross of a crucified Saviour. Here, Lord, give me that grace Thou hast promised to the lowly. Self-renouncing and sin-renouncing, I would seek to be exalted only in Jesus, crying out, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" In broken-heartedness of soul, I mourn the past. Distrustful of the future, I look only to Thee. Full of my own unworthiness, I turn to the infinitely worthy *One*. I seek to be washed in His blood—sanctified by His Spirit—guided by His counsel—depending on Him for every supply of

grace—and feeling that without Him I must perish.

May I take the humility and gentleness of Jesus as my pattern. Like Him, may I be meek and lowly in heart. Give me grace to avoid ostentation and pride, haughtiness and vanity, envy and uncharitableness. "In lowliness of mind may I esteem others better than myself." Let me realize every moment that I am a pensioner on Divine bounty —that I am alike "for temporals and spirituals" dependent on Thee—and that it well becomes me to be "clothed with humility." Oh, let me meekly and submissively lose my own will in Thine, in childlike teachableness, saying—"What wilt *Thou* have me to do?" May no murmur escape my lips at Thy dealings. May this lowliness of spirit lead me rather to wonder at Thy sparing mercy, that the great and holy Being I have provoked so long by my rebellion has not "cut me down."

Bless all connected to me by endearing bonds. May nature's ties be made doubly strong by those of covenant grace. Bless Thy cause and kingdom in the world. May Thy Spirit descend "like rain upon the mown grass, and showers that water the earth."

I commit myself unto Thee, and to the word of Thy grace. Guide me this day by Thy counsel. May I spend it as if it were to be my last. And when my last day *does* arrive, may it be to me the eve of a happy eternity. And all I ask is for Jesus' sake. Amen.

"CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING-KINDNESS IN THE MORNING, FOR IN THEE DO I TRUST."

20TH MORNING.

"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee."

"Only believe."—Mark v. 36.

For Simplicity of Faith.

O ETERNAL, ever-blessed Jehovah—Fountain of all light—Source of all happiness—"God of all grace"—look down upon me this morning with that love which "Thou bearest to Thine own," as I venture anew into Thy sacred presence. Let me enjoy a sweet season of fellowship with Thee. Let the world be shut out, and may I feel alone with God. "Under the shadow of Thy wings would I rejoice."

I come in the nothingness of the creature, standing alone in the fulness of Jesus. I come, "just as I am, without one plea"—as a sinner, and as the "chief of sinners"—to Thee, thou almighty Saviour. I seek to disown all creature confidence, and, with all the

burden of my guilt, to cast myself, for time and for eternity, at Thy feet. "Lord, save me, else I perish." I cannot stand in myself. I can stand only in Him who has stood so willing a Surety for me—who is still at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, presenting my name, and my prayers, and my plea, before the throne. I *have* no other confidence, and I *need* no other. Jesus, I am complete in Thee. Let me not look inwardly on myself, where there is everything to sink me in despondency and dismay; but let me look with the undivided and unwavering eye of faith to Thy bleeding sacrifice. I rejoice to think of the many robes in the Church triumphant Thy blood has already made white. I rejoice to know that the same blood is free as ever—the same invitation is addressed as ever—the promise and the Promiser remain "faithful" as ever—"Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."

Lord, I come—I plead Thy word. I come, irrespective of all I am, and all I have been. Magnify Thy grace in me. Show me my utter beggary and wretchedness by nature—that every step to glory is a step of grace; and while, with childlike faith, I rest on the finished work of Jesus, may I have the same simple trust and confidence in all His dealings towards me. May I feel that the Shepherd of Israel cannot lead me wrong—that His own way must be the safest and the best. Lord, "undertake Thou for me"—"I will follow Thee to prison and to death." Take me—lead me—use me, as Thou seest good. If I need chastisement, give me chastisement. If I need rebuke, let me not repine under the rod. Let me trust a Father's word—a Father's love—a Father's discipline. "Though Thou slay me, yet will I trust in Thee."

And as for myself, so for all dear to me. I pray that it may please Thee, of

Thine infinite mercy, to visit them with Thy salvation—to guide them by Thy counsel—to overrule all life's changes and vicissitudes and trials for their well-being, and at last to bring them safe to Thine eternal kingdom, through Jesus Christ—to whom, with Thee, O Father, and Thee, O eternal Spirit, three in one in covenant for our redemption, be ascribed all blessing, and honour, and glory, and praise, world without end. Amen.

"CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING-KINDNESS IN THE MORNING, FOR IN THEE DO I TRUST."

21st Morning.

"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee."

"Walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing."—Col. i. 10.

For Consistency of Walk.

O Lord, Thou art the heart-searching and the rein-trying God. To Thee all hearts are open—from Thee no secrets are hid. Cleanse Thou the thoughts of my heart this day, by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit. I would seek to begin its hours with Thee. May all its business and employments be perfumed with the fragrance of "the morning sacrifice."

O Thou great origin and end of all things, be Thou to me the Alpha and the Omega of my daily being. May I feel existence to be a blank without Thee. May I feel that I can only be truly happy when a sense of Thy favour, and friendship, and love is sweetly intermingled with life's duties—

thus lessening every burden—hallowing every trial—diminishing every cross!

I come to Thee once more, an unworthy sinner, to cast myself at my Saviour's feet. What am I, that Thou shouldst have borne with me so long! The axe "laid at the root of the trees" might long ago have cut me down; but I, a guilty cumberer, am still spared. The restrospect of existence, while a retrospect of patience and forbearance on Thy part, is one of mournful rebellion and ingratitude on mine. I have had a "name to live," but how much spiritual death in my best frames! I have had a form of godliness; how little have I lived out and acted out its power! More careful have I been to *appear* to be a Christian than really to *be* a Christian. How much unevenness in my walk—how much proclaimed and professed by the lip has been undone and denied in the life!

I come this morning to ask anew for

mercy to pardon, and grace to help me. Especially do Thou give me the grace of a holy consistency, doing all for Thy glory, having boldness to speak for Thee in the world. May my walk and conversation be the living evidence and expression of the sincerity and reality of the inner life.

For this end may I live more on Jesus. May my life be "hid with Christ in God." May I grow more and more out of myself and *into* my living Head. Self-humbled and self-emptied, may I ever be resorting to the all-fulness of an all-sufficient Saviour. May this be my habitual feeling—"Without Him I can do nothing." May this be my constant prayer—"Help me, Saviour, or I die."

May I be enabled this day, in His strength, to do something for God. However lowly my lot, however humble my abilities, may I feel, Lord, that Thou hast work for me in Thy vineyard. Let

me not bury my talent in the earth; may I "occupy it till Thou come," that "Thou mayest receive thine own with usury."

Have mercy on Thy whole Church. Pour out on all its members and office-bearers the spirit of meekness and zeal, of power and love, and of a sound mind. May "Holiness to the Lord" be written on its portals.

Hasten the blessed period when, the love of Jesus being enthroned in every heart and every Church, "we all shall be one." And all I ask is for the Redeemer's sake. Amen.

"CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING-KINDNESS IN THE MORNING, FOR IN THEE DO I TRUST."

22D MORNING.

"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee."

"This one thing I do."—Phil. iii. 13.

For Singleness of Eye.

MY FATHER who art in heaven, teach me, in childlike faith and confidence, to draw near this morning to Thy throne of grace. Vouchsafe me the blessed influences of Thy Holy Spirit, that I may wait on Thee undisturbed by worldly distractions, and enter on the duties of another day with my mind "stayed on God."

Blessed Jesus!—Thou who didst so freely give Thyself a ransom for many—save me, else I perish! I have no peace but in Thy pardoning, reconciling love. May Thy blood and righteousness be to me "a glorious dress," arrayed in which I may now and ever stand fearless and undismayed. I bless Thee, O God, if I have in any degree felt the preciousness of the Saviour, and

His adaptation to all the wants and weaknesses of my sinful, and sorrowful, and tempted nature. I thank Thee if Thou hast already hidden me in the clefts of the smitten Rock. My prayer is, that Thou mayest keep me there—that I may lean upon Jesus more than ever, and seek my happiness more exclusively in His service. May I every morning be drawn more closely by the cords of His love, and be led to fight more faithfully under His banner.

Oh for greater singleness of aim!—more self-emptying and self-abasing—that He may be all in all! Lord, I am conscious often of mingled motives, that would not stand the test of Thy pure eye and Thy holy Word! How often do I forfeit the joys of assurance by admitting rival claimants to the throne of my affections! How often are the surpassing interests and glories of eternity dimmed and obscured by the engrossing things of time and of sense! How mixed

with imperfection and earthliness and self-seeking are my best attempts to serve Thee! If weighed in the balance, how would my holiest services be found wanting!

Give me more of this unity and simplicity of purpose. Give me to make salvation more the one thing needful. Let all other love be subordinated to Thine. Do Thou be my "chiefest joy." May Thy service be my delight. May my heart become a little sanctuary, whence the incense of praise and love and thanksgiving is ascending continually. May it glow with holy zeal to promote Thy cause, and testify of Thy grace. Remembering all that Thou hast done for me, may I be animated to make a more entire consecration and surrender of all I am and have to Thy glory.

Let me feel that whatever my rank or station or circumstances are, I have some mission to perform for Thee. How

often dost Thou choose "the foolish things of the world to confound the things that are mighty!" Let me not think my talent too trifling to trade upon. May I "occupy it till my Lord comes." Let me not squander fleeting moments, or forego fleeting opportunities. "The night cometh, wherein none of us can work." Enable me now, bowing at Thy mercy-seat, to replenish anew my empty vessel with the oil of Thy grace, that the lamp of faith may be kept burning brightly all the day. All that I ask is for Jesus' sake. Amen.

"CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING-KINDNESS IN THE MORNING, FOR IN THEE DO I TRUST."

23D MORNING.

"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee."

"Abba, Father."—Rom. viii. 15.

For Filial Fearless.

MOST blessed God, I rejoice that I can look up to Thee, the mightiest of all beings, and call Thee by that name, which may well dispel all misgivings, and hush all disquietudes—"My Father who art in heaven."

Father, I have sinned against heaven and in Thy sight. The kindest of earthly parents could not so long have borne with ingratitude and waywardness like mine. Long ere now Thou mightest righteously have driven me an exile and a castaway from Thy presence. But the voice of parental mercy is not silenced. The hand of parental patience and love is "stretched out still." In the midst of deserved wrath, this is Thine own gracious declaration, "I will be a Father unto you!"

I mourn my grievous departures—my repeated declensions—my heinous ingratitude. Oh, let me no longer live in this state of guilty estrangement—forfeiting all the joys of a Father's tenderness, the sunshine of a Father's smile. May I know what it is for the soul, orphaned, and portionless, and friendless by nature, to repose in the security of Thy covenant-love. May I be enabled to enjoy more and more, every day, holy filial nearness to the mercy-seat—there unburdening into Thine ear all my wants and trials—my sorrows and perplexities—my backslidings and sins. Give me grace to bow with childlike submission to a Father's will—to bear without a murmur a Father's rod—to hear in every dealing, joyous or sorrowful, a Father's voice—and when death comes, to have every fear dispelled by listening to a Father's summons—"To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

Jesus, Thou blessed Elder Brother!

"in whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named," may I be enabled to imitate Thine example of holy resignation to Thy Father's will. May the cup of bitterest earthly sorrow be taken into my hands with Thine own breathing of devout submission—"This cup which Thou givest me to drink, shall I not drink it? Even so, Father, for so it seems good in Thy sight." It is my comfort, blessed Lord, to know, that while the best of earthly parents may err, Thou, the unerring God, never canst. In thy most mysterious dealings there is wisdom. In thy roughest voice there is mercy.

Adorable Redeemer, all these filial blessings and adoption-privileges I owe to Thee. It is Thy precious blood-shedding which has "set me among the children"—it is that which still keeps me there. Anew this day would I repair to Thy cross—anew would I supplicate that the Holy Spirit, the Divine Com-

forter, would be sent forth into my heart, enabling me to cry, "Abba, Father." May the thought of this blessed affiance in Thee, support me amid life's fitful changes, and transient friendships, and may I be enabled to dwell with holy delight on that glorious time, when, no longer an exiled pilgrim in a strange land, I shall be received at the gates of glory with a Father's welcome—"Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine."

I commend myself and all near and dear to me, this day, to Thy fatherly care and keeping. And all I ask is for Jesus' sake. Amen.

"CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING-KINDNESS IN THE MORNING, FOR IN THEE DO I TRUST."

24TH MORNING.

"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee."

"Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation."—Ps. li. 12.

For Restoration to favor.

O GOD, another morning has dawned upon me. "Thou better Sun of righteousness"—with the brightness of Thy rising may all the shadows of guilt and sin be dispersed. I come, weak and weary, guilty and heavy-laden, to Thee, beseeching Thee to bend Thy pitying eye upon me—to deal not with me as I have deserved, nor reward me according to mine iniquity. Blessed Jesus, look upon me. In Thee may I be pitied, pardoned, and forgiven!

I have erred and strayed from Thy way as a lost sheep. I have wandered from the home of my God. I have been seeking my happiness in what is shadowy and unreal. The world and its delusive hopes have been preferred to Thee.

My heart, which ought ever to be a little altar and sanctuary of praise, has burned with false incense. Thy love and glory have not maintained their paramount place in my affections. I have righteously forfeited "the joys of Thy salvation." My only marvel is, that, as a wandering star, Thou hast not left me to drift onwards to the blackness of darkness for ever. O leave me not to perish! I mourn my wanderings. In leaving Thee, I feel I have left my Best Friend. I have caused an aching void in this heart, which the world, with all its joys and riches and pleasures, can never fill. I cannot have one hour of happiness, if mingled with the thought that I am estranged from Thee, my God. Blissful hours of Thy favour I once enjoyed, come sorrowfully to my remembrance; and, though the cup of earthly happiness be full to the brim, I have still to breathe the prayer —"Oh that it were with me as in months

past, when the candle of the Lord did shine!"

"Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation. Leave me not in this state of distance and alienation. "O Lord, I beseech Thee, deliver my soul." Snap these chains of earthliness that are still binding me to the dust, that, on the wings of faith, I may soar upwards, and find rest and quietude where alone it can be found—in Thy renewed love and favour. May past backslidings drive me more to Thy grace. Nothing in myself, may I find and feel that my all in all is in Thee. Discover to me my own emptiness, and the overflowing fulness of Jesus. May I every day see more of His matchless excellencies—His incomparable loveliness—the sweets of His service — that I may never feel tempted to wander from His fold, and carefully avoid all that would risk the forfeiture of that favour which indeed is "life."

Lord, let me know *this* day something of this happiness. Let me not be content with the *name* to live. Let religion be with me a real thing—let it be everything; life-influencing, sin-subduing, self-renouncing. Let me diffuse all around me the happy glow of a spirit that feels at peace with God.

And now, Lord, what wait I for? "My hope" for myself, my friends, and all for whom I ought to pray, "is in Thee." Listen to these my supplications; and all I ask is for Jesus' sake. Amen.

"CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING-KINDNESS IN THE MORNING, FOR IN THEE DO I TRUST."

25TH MORNING.

"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee."

"And confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."—Heb. xi. 13.

For a Pilgrim Spirit.

O GOD, again, in the multitude of Thy mercies, Thou art permitting me to approach the footstool of Thy throne. I am another day nearer death—oh! may I be a day nearer Thee! With a new morning's dawn may I hear the pilgrim summons—"Arise, for this is not your rest." Ere I mingle with the world, give me to feel I am not *of* it, but born *from* above, and *for* above; and, cherishing more and more of a pilgrim spirit, may my prayer and watchword be—"I desire a better country."

Lord, I bless Thee for the rich provision Thou hast made for the wilderness journey—for all Thy mercies, temporal, providential, and spiritual. For-

bid that the manifold gifts of Thy love should draw me away from Thyself, the bountiful Giver, or obliterate the solemn impression—"I am a stranger with Thee and a sojourner, as all my fathers were." May I "use the world without abusing it." By the varied discipline of Thy providence, may I be led to feel that all my well-springs are in Thee. May the world's fascinations be becoming more powerless—sin more hated—holiness more loved—heaven more realized—God more "the exceeding joy" of my soul. Driven from all creature stays and earthly refuges, may Jesus be the prop and staff of my pilgrimage. When the world is bright, may I rest upon Him, and seek that He sanctify my prosperity. When the wilderness is dreary, and the way dark, may He hallow adversity. When friends are removed, may I feel that I have One left more faithful than the best of all earthly friends; and when death comes, and the

pilgrim warfare ceases, leaning confidingly on that same arm. may I enter the pilgrim's rest.

O adorable Saviour!—Thou who wast once Thyself a pilgrim—the lonely, weary, homeless, afflicted One—who hadst often no arm to lean upon, and no voice to cheer Thee—an outcast wanderer and sojourner in Thine own creation—I rejoice to think that Thou hast trodden all this wilderness-world before me—that Thou knowest its dreariest paths. I take comfort in the assurance that there is at the right hand of the Majesty on high, a Fellow-Sufferer, who has drunk of every "brook in the way"—shed every tear of earthly sorrow—heaved every sigh of earthly suffering—and who, being Himself the "tried and tempted One," is able and willing to succour every pilgrim who is tried and tempted too.

I beseech Thee this day to look down in great kindness on all my beloved

friends. Seal to them a saving interest in Thy great salvation. Wash them all in Thy blood—sanctify them all by Thy Spirit. May not one be wanting on "the day when Thou makest up Thy jewels."

Compassionate a fallen world. Thy Church is slumbering—the enemy is all vigilant—souls are perishing. Arise, Lord, and plead Thine own cause. Promote greater unity and love and concord among Thine own people. Let us be nearer Jesus, and then we shall be nearer one another. Give us all more of the single eye to Thy glory. Make us more self-sacrificing—more heavenly-minded—more Saviour-like. And all I ask is for Jesus' sake. Amen.

"CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING-KINDNESS IN THE MORNING, FOR IN THEE DO I TRUST."

26TH MORNING.

"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee."

"Prepare to meet thy God."—Amos iv. 12.

For Preparation for Death.

O ETERNAL, everlasting God—Author of my being—my continual, unwearied Benefactor—I desire to come anew this morning into Thy presence, thanking Thee for Thy sparing mercies. Instead of making my last night's pillow a pillow of death, I am again among the living to praise Thee. Oh that I were enabled to live every day, and to rise every morning, as if it were to be my last, as if my next waking were to be in the morning of immortality!

Lord, how little am I influenced and impressed by the solemn records of death all around me! Friend after friend is departing—the circle of acquaintance is narrowed. The proclamation is ever sounding with fresh emphasis in my

ears, "Be ye also ready;" and yet how prone to disregard the solemn monitions! how apt to peril my preparation on the peradventures of a dying hour! Blessed God, my prayer is, that I may have my loins girded and my lamp burning. Let me not wait to have my vessel replenished till the voice of the Bridegroom be heard and I am summoned to meet Him. May I now so repose my every confidence in Jesus, that death may be disarmed of its sting, —that the hour which to the unwary and unwatchful is one of darkness and terror, may be to me the eve of the blessed Sabbath of eternity—the threshold and the portal of a world of endless joy.

Lord, give me to feel that "the sting of death is sin"—that, not till I get the blessed sense of all my sins cancelled and forgiven in the blood of the Surety, can I be ready for my departure. "To me to live may it be Christ," that so

"to die" may be great and eternal "gain." Let me be enabled, by faith in death's great Conqueror, to cultivate that holy familiarity with a dying hour, that I may be enabled, when it comes, to fall sweetly "asleep in Jesus," and to hear His voice of love saying, "It is I, be not afraid."

Look in mercy on the multitudes who are content to live on, unmeet and unprepared for their great change. Awaken them to a sense of their guilt and peril. Shew them their affecting need of Jesus —that time is wasting and eternity is hastening—that, "as the tree falleth, so must it lie."

I pray for the heathen who are perishing for lack of knowledge. Countenance and bless all the efforts of Thy Church to disseminate among them the gospel of the grace of God. May Thy missionary servants, who have gone with their lives in their hands to the dark places of the earth, experience a

peace which the world knows not of. May they have many souls as their glory and joy and crown at the day of Christ's appearing.

O give us all grace, in our varied stations and relations in life, to do something for Thee. Let us not bury or hide our talents; but, as members of a ransomed priesthood, may we lay our time, our opportunities, our substance, on Thine altar, and seek to "shew forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvellous light." And all I ask is for Jesus' sake. Amen.

"CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING-KINDNESS IN THE MORNING, FOR IN THEE DO I TRUST."

27TH MORNING.

"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee."

"Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust."—Is. xxvi. 19.

For a Joyful Resurrection.

GRACIOUS God, Thou hast again dispersed the darkness of another natural night. Every rising earthly sun is bringing me nearer the gladdening daybreak of immortality. O grant that, when the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised, I may be ready to listen undismayed to the summons, "Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him.

My prayer is, that I may now be made partaker of the blessedness of the first resurrection from a death of sin. As one "alive from the dead," may I rise and walk with a living Saviour "in newness of life," that thus I may at last share also in the more glorious resurrection of His ransomed saints,

when his "dead men shall live," and together with His body "they shall arise," obeying the joyous mandate of their risen Head, "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust."

Blessed Jesus, I do rejoice to think of Thine own triumphant rising from the tomb. I rejoice to be able to visit in thought Thy vacant sepulchre, and to hear the glad tidings, "He is not here, He is risen!" "The Lord has risen!"—it is the blessed pledge and earnest of my own redemption from the power of the grave—that "because Christ lives, I shall live also." O may "my life be now hid with Christ in God, so that when Christ, who is my life, shall appear, I may also appear with him in glory." Keep me ever in the frame I should wish to be found in when my Lord cometh. May the lamp of faith and love be ever brightly burning. May it never be mine to be awoke, by the midnight cry, to the awful consciousness, "my lamp has gone

out." May I rather be among the number of "waiting servants," who, when their Lord "cometh and knocketh," are ready to "open unto Him immediately."

Do Thou impart to all near and dear to me this day the same spiritual and eternal blessings I ask for myself. May they, too, be united to Jesus—"planted in the likeness of his death," that they may be found also "in the likeness of His resurrection." May we all seek to bear an increasingly holy resemblance in love one to another, and to our great living Head, in whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named; and if for a little while separated by death, may we on the great day of His appearing, be reunited in bonds that shall know no dissolution.

Hasten that blessed time when our world, so long groaning and travailing in pain, shall put on her resurrection attire, and exult in the glorious liberty

of Thy Children. "Come, Lord Jesus; come quickly." "Why tarry the wheels of Thy chariot?"

Lord, I commend myself to Thee. Prepare me for living, prepare me for dying. Let me live *near* Thee in grace now, that I may live *with* Thee in glory everlasting. Let me be reconciled submissively to endure all that Thy sovereign wisdom and love seem meet to appoint—looking forward, through the tears and sorrows of a weeping world, to that better day-spring, when "I shall behold Thy face in righteousness," and be "satisfied, when I awake in Thy likeness." And all I ask is for the Redeemer's sake. Amen.

"CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING-KINDNESS IN THE MORNING, FOR IN THEE DO I TRUST."

28TH MORNING

"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee."

"The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly."—Rom xvi. 20.

For the Conquest of Satan.

O GOD, I bless Thee for the returning mercies of a new day. "I laid me down and slept; I awaked: for the Lord sustained me. I will not be afraid of ten thousands that have set themselves against me." Vouchsafe me, I beseech Thee, Thy fatherly protection and blessing, that all my thoughts may be ordered by Thee, and all my plans and purposes overruled by Thee, and all my joys hallowed by Thee, and all my sorrows sanctified by Thee. Keep me near Thyself. While I seek to realise, every hour of this day, the power and subtilty of my spiritual adversaries, may I rejoice in the assurance that greater is He that is with me than all they that can be against me—that "though an

host should encamp against me," with God on my side. "I need fear no evil."

I mourn the prevalence of sin, both in the world and in my own heart. Thy creation still groans and travails under its power. "The Prince of the power of the air still works in the children of disobedience." "The whole world lieth in the Wicked One." Often is Satan still "desiring to have me, that he might sift me as wheat"—"standing at my right hand to resist me"—to oppose my plea and damage my cause,—sending some "thorn in the flesh to buffet me" —marring my peace, disturbing my joy, and hindering and impeding my spiritual growth and advancement. But, Lord, it is my comfort to know that there is in heaven a "stronger than the strong man"—that no time can impair or diminish the comfort of the assurance, "I have prayed for *thee*, that thy faith fail not." When Satan assaults, blessed Jesus, I will think of Thy continual in-

tercession. "Thy hand is never shortened, that it cannot save."

May I ever have grace given me to "resist the devil that he may flee from me"—to keep watchfully guarded every loophole of the heart. May I abstain from all appearance of evil, avoiding every place and every company where his unholy influences are likely to prevail. "Lead me not into temptation," and, if tempted, Lord, make a way of escape, that I may be able to bear it.

O Thou adorable Intercessor within the veil, it is my comfort to know that, in Thy season of humiliation on earth, Thou wert "not ignorant of his devices." Thou didst also, of him, "suffer, being tempted," and Thou art therefore the more able "to succour them that are tempted." I rejoice to think that, exalted on Thy mediatorial throne, Thou shalt reign until Satan and every other enemy be put under Thy feet, and until the kingdoms of this world (so long usurped

by him) shall become the "one kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ."

Heavenly Father, take this day all my beloved friends under Thy guardian care. May they dwell in the secret place of the Most High, and abide under the shadow of the Almighty. May they too, be able to take up the triumphant challenge—"God is for us, who can be against us?" and when their earthly work and warfare is accomplished, may we all meet in that sinless world where Satan's seat no more can be found, and Satan's temptations shall no longer be felt or feared. And all that I ask is for Jesus' sake. Amen.

"CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING KINDNESS IN THE MORNING, FOR IN THEE DO I TRUST."

29TH MORNING

"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee."

"I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh."—Joel ii. 28.

For the Outpouring of the Spirit.

O GOD, I desire this morning to approach with lowly reverence the footstool of Thy throne, adoring and praising Thee for the rest of the past night, and the comforts and blessings of a new day. O holy, blessed, eternal Trinity, three persons, one God, have mercy upon me, and grant me Thy benediction and love.

Most blessed Spirit of all grace, more especially would I at this time invoke Thy presence and nearness. I acknowledge, with shame and confusion of face, how often I have grieved Thee by resisting Thy gracious influences. How often hast Thou pleaded with me by the voice of Providence, and yet I have

turned a deaf ear to Thy repeated warnings and remonstrances! Thou hast spoken to me in prosperity, when the full cup demanded in return a heart full of gratitude. Thou hast spoken to me in adversity, when by the emptied cup and the broken cistern, Thou wouldst have driven me from all earthly things, to the everlasting God Himself, as my only satisfying Portion. Thou hast spoken to me by the terrors of the law and by the tender accents of gospel love, and yet I have continued to "spend my money for that which is not bread, and my labor for that which satisfieth not." Long ere now I might have exhausted Thy patience. "It is of the Lord's mercies I am not consumed."

But "take not, O gracious God, Thy Holy Spirit from me." Come, Thou blessed Enlightener, Quickener, Sanctifier, and inspire this dull cold heart. Touched as with a live coal, may the flame of a holy love to Thee be rekin-

dled on its altar. "Return, O Holy Dove, thou Messenger of rest," from the true ark of God. Give me grace to hate the sins which drove Thee away from this guilty breast. Breathe upon me, and say, "Peace be unto you; receive ye the Holy Ghost." Do Thou invigorate my languishing affections. May I realise my dependence on Thee for every pulsation of spiritual life. Without Thee I perish.

While I pray for this blessed Agent in behalf of my own soul, Lord, it is my earnest prayer that He may be poured out upon all flesh—that that time may soon come, when the rain of His gracious influences shall descend on a barren church and parched world. Hasten the Pentecost of the "latter day." Earth is at present but as the prophet's "valley of dry bones." Come Thou blessed Spirit of all grace, "breathe upon these dry bones, that they may live."

And may the same blessed and benign influences be shed on every heart that is dear to me. The Spirit of the Lord is not straitened. O my Father in heaven, hast thou not promised to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Thee? I pray that all my beloved friends may become members of that mystical body of which Jesus is the living Head, so that the oil of anointing grace, poured upon Him by the Spirit, and flowing down to the skirts of His garments, may be shared by His humblest and unworthiest members. O that each and all of our hearts may become living temples, in which the Holy Ghost dwells! May nothing that is unholy find admission there, but, "sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, the earnest of our inheritance," may we be daily and habitually living in the expectation of eternal glory. Through Jesus Christ. Amen.

"CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING-KINDNESS IN THE MORNING, FOR IN THEE DO I TRUST."

30TH MORNING.

"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee."

"That they all may be one."—John xvii. 21.

For the Union of Thy People.

O GOD, Thou eternal Fountain of all excellence and glory!—through the one "new and living way" I desire this morning to approach Thee. Powerless in my own pleadings, I look up to the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, to that "Prince who has power with God," and at all times "prevails." Guilty, I come to this guiltless Redeemer. Diseased, I come to this great Physician. Outcast, I come to Him who has promised that He will by no means "cast out." May His presence always be with me. May I know Him, and believe in Him, and rejoice in Him. May I feel that I need no other Saviour—that He is all

I require for life or for death—for time or for eternity.

I rejoice to think of the glorious multitude around Thy throne—the trophies of Thy grace—already wearing the white robe and the immortal palm. I rejoice to think of the blessed unity which pervades their glorified ranks: no note of discord disturbing their lofty harmonies—all seeing eye to eye, and heart to heart.

I lament the sad and mournful estrangement of Christian from Christian in Thy Church below—that so many, treading the same heavenly journey, with the same glorious portals in view, should be following separate and diverse footpaths—that so many brethren in the Lord, whose interchanges ought to be all love, should be looking coldly and censoriously on one another. How much ungodly jealousy, and heart-burning, and mutual recrimination, among Thy professing people! How little of

the spirit which of old provoked the testimony even of heathen gainsayers—"See how these Christians love one another!" O thou blessed "Author of peace and lover of concord," do Thou, in Thy mercy, pour out on Thy Church on earth, a greater spirit of unity, and brotherly-kindness, and charity. Do Thou, in Thy mercy, heal the bleeding wounds of Thy mystical body—casting over them the mantle of love. Bring us all, blessed Jesus, as individuals and as churches, nearer Thyself, and then shall we be nearer one another. It is because of our distance from Thee, the great Sun of Righteousness, the Source of light and life and peace, that we, as wandering stars, are revolving in such devious and distant orbits. Give us to feel that we are all members of one mighty family, of which Thou art the glorious Head—that, though following diverse tracks, we are sheep of the same pasture, owning the same "Chief Shepherd"—that,

though enrolled in different ranks, we are allies in the same great army, fighting under the banner of the same great Captain of salvation. O forbid that, in these "latter days"—in these times of trouble, and rebuke, and blasphemy, when "the enemy is coming in like a flood"—we should waste our strength on petty and puny dissensions! May we be led to merge the few points in which we differ, in the many in which we can unite.

Preserve me, good Lord, this day, from all uncharitableness. May I "judge not, that I be not judged." May I have Thy favour resting upon me in all the day's duties, and Thy love softening and sanctifying all its trials. May all my beloved friends be one with me in Jesus—one now, and one in glory everlasting. Amen.

"CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING-KINDNESS IN THE MORNING, FOR IN THEE DO I TRUST."

31st Morning.

"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee."

"Thy kingdom come."—Luke xi. 2.

For the Coming of Thy Kingdom.

O ETERNAL, ever-blessed God, whose merciful kindness is new to me every morning—give me throughout this day that peace which the world cannot give. As the beams of the material sun are lighting up anew my earthly chamber, may the inner chamber of my soul be illumined by a better and brighter radiance. Jesus! thou blessed Fountain of light, and life, and glory, do Thou disperse all the darkness of unbelief and sin. May Thy presence and love hallow all my joys, and mitigate and sanctify all my sorrows.

Ere I enter on the day's duties, do Thou anew sprinkle the lintels and door-posts of my heart with Thine own most precious blood; may my inmost

thoughts and purposes, and desires, and affections be consecrated to that God whose property they are. May I have an increasing experience of the sweets of Thy favour, and friendship, and love. With Thee, blessed Lord, I am rich, whatever else I want; without Thee, I am poor, though I have the wealth of worlds beside. Take what Thou wilt away—but take not Thyself. Nothing can fill and satisfy the longings of my immortal nature but Thee—all worldly happiness and creature joys are poor substitutes for the inexhaustible source of all joy. Let me know what it is, amid the wreck of earthly refuges and hopes, to exult in the persuasion, "The Lord liveth; and blessed be my Rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted."

While I pray that Thy kingdom may come in my own heart, I would especially pray for its extension throughout the world. Arise, O God, and let Thine

enemies be scattered. May the blessed day soon arrive when a rejoicing and emancipated world shall own no longer habitations of darkness and horrid cruelty—when Jew and Gentile shall welcome the Prince of Peace to the Throne of Universal Empire—and "all ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God." "Come, Lord Jesus; come quickly." Let the cry soon break over Thy now burdened Church, "Let us be glad and rejoice, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready." Grant, Lord, that *I* may be in readiness to meet Thee. May my loins now be girded, and my lamp brightly burning, that, at the Bridegroom's summons, I may be able joyfully to respond, "Lo, this is my God! I have waited for Him."

Grant this day to all near and dear to me, as well as to myself, the special tokens of Thy blessing and love. Fold my beloved friends in the arms of Thy

mercy. Teaching them to do Thy holy will, do Thou say *of* them and *to* them, "The same is my mother, and sister, and brother." Guide us all by Thy counsel here. May we feel that the way in which Thou art leading us is the kindest and the best that covenant love can devise; and when our appointed time on earth is finished, do Thou receive us into everlasting habitations through Jesus Christ our Lord.

And now, to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, be ascribed, as is most due, all blessing, and honour, and glory, and praise, world without end. Amen.

"CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING-KINDNESS IN THE MORNING, FOR IN THEE DO I TRUST."

"MY SOUL WAITETH FOR THE LORD MORE THAN THEY THAT WATCH FOR THE MORNING."—PS. CXXX. 6.

THE

NIGHT WATCHES.

'Sun of my soul! thou Saviour dear,
It is not Night if thou be near;
Oh! may no earth-born cloud arise,
To hide Thee from Thy servant's eyes!"

The Night Watches.

WHILE the title of this second part indicates its design as a series of evening meditations, that title may be more peculiarly suggestive of those experiences of earthly sorrow, during which this has ever proved the most blessed solace—"I have remembered THY NAME, O Lord, *in the night.*"

May every reader be able to make the assurance of the Psalmist his own—"The Lord will command His loving-kindness in the day-time, and *in the night* His song shall be with me." (Ps. xlii. 8.)

"When the soft dews of kindly sleep
My wearied eyelids gently sleep,
Be my last thought, how sweet to rest
For ever on my Saviour's breast!

"Abide with me from morn till eve,
For without Thee I cannot live:
Abide with me when night is nigh,
For without Thee I dare not die!"

{ 1st Night of Month

"I meditate on Thee in the Night Watches."

"From everlasting to everlasting thou art God."—Ps. xc. 2.

On Thy Glory.

My Soul! Seek to fill thyself with thoughts of the Almighty! Lose thyself in the impenetrable tracts of His glory! "Canst thou by searching find out God?" Can the animalcule fathom the ocean, or the worm scale the skies? Can the finite grasp the Infinite—the mortal Immortality? We can do no more than stand on the brink of the shoreless sea, and cry, "O the depth!" "*From* everlasting!"—shrouded in the great and awful mystery of eternity! Before one star revolved in its sphere—before one angel moved his wing—*God was!*—the shadow of His own infinite presence filling all space. All time to Him is but as the heaving of a breath—the beat of a pulse—the twinkle of an eye. The Eternity of bliss, which is the noblest

heritage of the creature, is in its nature progressive. It admits of advance in degrees of happiness and glory. Not so with the Eternity of the Great Creator; He was as perfect before the birth of time as He will be when "time shall be no longer"—as infinitely glorious when He inhabited alone the solitudes of immensity, as He is now with the songs of angel and archangel sounding in His ears! But "who can shew forth all His praise?" We can at best but lisp the alphabet of His glory. Moses, who *saw* more of God than most, makes it still his prayer, "I beseech thee, shew me Thy glory." Paul, who *knew* more of God than other men, prays still, "that I *may* know him." "Our safest eloquence," says Hooker, "concerning Him, is our silence, when we confess without confession, that His glory is inexplicable."

And is *this* the Being to whom I can look up with sweetest confidence, and

call "*My Father*"? Is it this Infinite One, whom "the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain," I can call "My God"? My soul! contemplate the medium through which it is thou canst see the glory of God, and yet live! "No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." He, who dwells in light inaccessible, comes forth from the pavilion of His glory in the person of "Immanuel, God with us." In Christ, "the Image of the invisible God," the creature—ay, sinners—can gaze unconsumed on the lustres of Deity! Reader! be it thine to glorify him. Seek thus to fulfil the great design of thy being. Let all thy words and ways, tnine actions and purposes, thy crosses and losses, redound to His praise. The highest seraph can have no higher or nobler end than this —the glory of the God before whom he casts his crown. But he has a claim on

thee, which He has not on the unredeemed angel. "He gave *Himself* for thee!" This mightiest of all boons which Omnipotence *could* give, is the guarantee for the bestowment of all lesser necessary blessings, and for the withholding of all *un*necessary trials. Whilst thou art called to behold "His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father," remember its characteristic; it is not a glory to appal thee by its splendours, but to win and captivate thee by its beauties—it is "full of grace and full of truth." He is thy God in covenant. "Underneath and around thee are the everlasting arms." Thou mayest compose thyself on thy nightly pillow, with the sweet pledge of security, and say—

"I WILL BOTH LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE AND SLEEP;
FOR THOU, LORD, ONLY MAKEST ME DWELL
IN SAFETY!"

2D NIGHT.

"I meditate on Thee in the Night Watches."

"Thou art the same."—Ps. cii. 27.

On Thy Immutability.

WHAT a fountain of comfort is to be found in the Immutability of God! Not one ripple can disturb the calm of His unchanging nature. Were it so, He would no longer be a perfect Being—He would undeify Himself—He would cease to be God!

"Change is our portion here!" "They shall perish," is the brief chronicle regarding everything on this side heaven. The firmament above us, the earth beneath us, the elements around us—"all these things shall be dissolved." Scenes of hallowed endearment—they are fled! Friends who sweetened our pilgrimage with their presence—they are gone! But here is a sure and safe anchorage amid the world's heaving ocean of vicissitude—"*Thou* art the same." All is changing but the Un-

changing One! The earthly scaffolding may give way, but the living Temple remains. The reed may bend to the blast, but the living Rock spurns and outlives the storm!

How blessed, especially, to contemplate the unchangeableness of our Great High Priest!—"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever!" True, He is in one sense "changed." No longer the "man of sorrows"—the homeless wanderer—He is enthroned amid the glories of heaven. Seraphs praise Him—Saints adore Him; but His *Heart* knows no change! His ascension glories have not obliterated His tender human sympathies. We can think of Him receiving an outcast sinner, or stilling the Tiberias storm, or standing at the gate of Nain, or weeping tears of pity over a lost city, or tears of sympathy over a buried friend, and write over all these, "*Thou art the same!*" The name which He bequeathed by angels to

His Church until he comes again is—"*that same Jesus!*" His own Patmos title is His memorial for all time—"I *am* He that liveth!"

Believer! has He ever seemed to change towards *thee?* Art thou even now mourning over the withdrawal of that countenance whose smile is heaven? Art thou saying in the bitterness of thy spirit, "Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious?"—the change is with thyself, not with thy God. Behind the clouds of thine own departure, the Sun of His love shines brightly as ever. "*He* fainteth not, neither is weary."

Or, it may be, thou art labouring under other trials. The hand of thy God may be heavy upon thee. The secret thought may be harboured that some tear might have been spared—that thy chastisement might have been less severe—that thy bereavement, with its dark accompaniments, might have been mitigated or averted. Look upwards!

and take the Psalmist's antidote as thine own, "*I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High.*" Think that the same hand which was for thee nailed to the cross, is now pleading for thee on the throne, ordering and controlling every trial, and over every dark providence writing the unanswerable challenge, "He who spared not his own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall he not with Him also freely give us all things?" Oh! thus pillowing thy head on the Immutability of Jesus, amid the rude buffetings of a changing world, thou wilt be able, night after night, to say, till the dawn of a morning breaks on thee, which knows neither night nor vicissitude—

"I WILL BOTH LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE AND SLEEP;
FOR THOU, LORD, ONLY MAKEST ME DWELL
IN SAFETY!"

3d Night

"I meditate on Thee in the Night Watches."

"The Lord God omnipotent reigneth."—Rev. xix. 16.

On Thy Omnipotence.

BELIEVER! what can better support and sustain thee amid the trials of thy pilgrimage than the thought that thou hast an Omnipotent arm to lean upon? The God with whom thou hast to do is boundless in His resources. There is no crossing His designs—no thwarting His purposes—no questioning His counsels. His mandate is law—"He speaks, and it is done!" Thy need is great. From the humblest crumb of providential goodness, up to the richest blessing of Divine grace, thou art hanging from moment to moment a pensioner on Jehovah's bounty; but, fear not! "I am the Almighty God!" Finite necessities can never exhaust infinite fulness—"My God shall supply all thy need!"

To Thee, O blessed Jesus! "all power has been committed in heaven and in

earth." "*All power!*" He has in His hands the reins of universal empire. To "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" has been intrusted the seven-sealed roll of Providence. Whatever be the boon which the poorest, weakest, loneliest, most afflicted of His saints require, if it be really for their good, the "Wonderful Counsellor" secures it. "As a Prince, He has power with God," and must "prevail." He combines in His adorable Person all a sinner requires. A heart tender enough to love—a hand strong enough to save. The Elder Brother!—the "Mighty God!" How He delights in the exercise of that omnipotence in behalf of His own people! in *ruling over* their interests and *overruling* their trials *for* their interests! When He prays for himself, it is "*Not my will.*" When He prays for them, it is, "*Father, I will!*"

May I not well take the motto which He still bears on His breastplate before

the throne, as the ground of support and encouragement "in all time of tribulation"—"able to save even unto *the uttermost*"?

"The golden censer in His hand,
He offers hearts from every land,
Tied to His own by gentlest band
Of silent love.
About Him wingèd blessings stand,
In act to move."

My enemies are many—their name is Legion. Satan, the great adversary—the world, and "the world's trinity"—the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life;—heart traitors—bosom sins. But "He that is *for* me is greater far than all that can be *against* me." He is "stronger" than the "strong man"—Christ *the Power of God!*" "I that speak in righteousness, *mighty* to save!"

Believer! art thou in trial, beaten down with a great fight of afflictions—like the disciples, out in a midnight of

storm, buffeting a sea of trouble? Fear not! When the tempest has done its work—when the trial has fulfilled its embassy, the voice which hushed the waters of old has only to give forth the omnipotent mandate, "Peace, be still!" and immediately there will be "a great calm." The "all power" of Jesus!—what a pillow on which to rest my aching head! disarming all my fears, and inducing thoughts of sweetest comfort, consolation, and joy.

"I WILL BOTH LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE AND SLEEP;
FOR THOU, LORD, ONLY MAKEST ME DWELL
IN SAFETY!"

4TH NIGHT.

"I meditate on Thee in the Night Watches.

"Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from Thy presence ?"—Ps. cxxxix. 7.

On Thy Omnipresence.

The Ubiquity of God! How baffling to any finite conprehension! to think that above us, and around us, and within us, there is nothing but Deity—the invisible footprints of an Omniscient, Omnipresent One! "His eyes are on every place!" on rolling planets and tiny atoms, on the bright seraph and the lowly worm;—roaming in searching scrutiny through the tracks of immensity, and reading the occult and hidden page of my heart! "All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do."

"God, I feel Thy presence nigh,
Everywhere o'er nature's face
Wheresoe'er I turn my eye,
I Thy living footsteps trace!
Nought can sever me from Thee—
Everywhere Thou art with me!"

O God! shall this Thy Omnipresence appall me? Nay, in my seasons of sadness and sorrow and loneliness—when other comforts and comforters have failed—when, it may be, in the darkness and silence of some midnight hour, in vain I have sought repose—how sweet to think, "My God is here!" I am not alone. The Omniscient One, to whom the darkness and the light are both alike, is hovering over my sleepless pillow! "He that keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps!"

O Thou eternal Sun! it cannot be darkness or loneliness or sadness where Thou art. There can be no night to the soul which has been cheered with Thy glorious radiance!

"Lo, *I* am with you alway!" How precious, blessed Jesus! is this Thy legacy of parting love! In the midst of Thy Church till the end of time—*ever* present, *omni*present! The true "Pillar of Cloud" by day and "fire by night,"

preceding and encamping by us in every step of our wilderness-journey. My soul! think of Him at this moment in the mysteriousness of His Godhead nature—and yet, with all the exquisitely tender sympathies of a glorified humanity, as present with every member of the family He has redeemed with His blood! ay, and as much present with every individual soul as if He had none other to care for, but as if *that one* engrossed all His affection and love! The Great Builder, surveying every stone and pillar of His spiritual temple—the Great Shepherd, with His eye on every sheep of His fold—the Great High Priest and Elder Brother, marking every tear-drop—noting every sorrow—listening to every prayer—knowing the peculiarities of every case—no number perplexing Him—no variety bewildering Him—able to attend to all, and overtake all, and answer all; myriad wants drawing hourly on His Treasury, and yet no diminution:

that Treasury, ever emptying, and yet ever filling, and always full!

Jesus! Thy perpetual and all-pervading presence turns darkness into day. I am not left unbefriended to weather the storms of life, if Thy hand be from hour to hour piloting my frail bark. Gracious antidote to every earthly sorrow, "*I have set the Lord always before me!*" Even now, as night is drawing its curtains around me, be this my closing prayer—"Blessed Saviour! abide with me, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent!" Under the overshadowing wings of Thy presence and love,

"I WILL BOTH LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE AND SLEEP;
FOR THOU, LORD, ONLY MAKEST ME DWELL
IN SAFETY!"

5TH NIGHT.

"I meditate on Thee in the Night Watches."

"His understanding is infinite."—Ps. cxlvii. 5.

On Thy Wisdom.

How baffling often are God's dispensations! The more we attempt to fathom their mystery, the more are we driven to rest in the best earthly solution—"Thy judgments are a great deep!"

But where sense says, "All these things are against me," faith has a different verdict—"All things are working together for my good." This is the province of faith, confidingly to lean on the arm of God, and to say, "The Lord is righteous in all His ways." *We* speak of God "foreseeing!" There is no such thing. The past, present, and future are with Him all alike. He sees the end from the beginning. We can discern but a short way, and that short way through a false and distorted medium. In a piece of earthly mechanism

we seldom can discover beauty in the incompleted structure. The mightiest works of science, while in progress, are often a chaos of confusion: it is only when finished we can admire the relation and adjustment of every part to the whole. So with the mechanism of God's moral administration. At present, how much mystery! But, when in the light of eternity we come to contemplate the completion of the mighty plan, how shall we be brought to own and exclaim, "The works of the Lord are right!"

> "But patience! there may come a time,
> When these dull ears shall scan aright
> Strains that outring earth's drowsy chime,
> As Heaven outshines the taper's light!"

Believer! are the dealings of thy God at present wearing a mysterious aspect to thee? Art thou about to enter some dark cloud, and exclaiming, "Verily Thou art a God that hidest Thyself?" Dost thou "fear to enter the cloud?" Take courage! It will be with thee as

with the disciples; unexpected glimpses of heavenly glory,—unlooked-for tokens of the Saviour's presence and love await thee! If thy Lord lead thee into the cloud, follow Him. If He "constrain thee to get into the ship," obey Him. The cloud will burst in blessing; the ship will conduct thee (may it be over a stormy sea) to a quiet haven at last! It is only the surface of the ocean that is rough. All beneath is a deep calm, and in every threatening wave there is a "need-be!"

Oh! trust *Him*, who is emphatically "The Wisdom of God." He is thy Counsellor—combining the prescience of God with the experience and sympathy of man. He thus, pre-eminently, "knows His client's case." He is pledged to use the discipline most wisely suited for each.

"O Thou whose wisdom guides my way,
Though now it seem severe,
Forbid my unbelief to say,
'There is no wisdom here.'

"Lord! if Thou bend my spirit low,
Love only I shall see;
The very hand that strikes the blow
Was wounded once for me."

Under the blessed persuasion, that a day of disclosures is at hand, when, "in His light, I shall see light," I will trust the wisdom I cannot trace, and repeat, each night, as the shadows of evening gather around me, until the nights of earth's ignorance vanish before the breaking of an eternal day—

"I WILL BOTH LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE AND SLEEP;
FOR THOU, LORD, ONLY MAKEST ME DWELL
IN SAFETY."

6TH NIGHT.

"I meditate on Thee in the Night Watches."

"Thou only art holy."—Rev. xv. 4.

On Thy Holiness.

WHAT an awful perfection is this! It denotes the burning Purity of Jehovah. It would seem to form the loftiest theme for the adorations of saints and angels. They cease not day nor night to cry, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty!" It evokes from the Church on earth her loudest strains—"Let them praise His great and terrible name, *for* it is *holy!*"

"Holy, Holy, Holy Three!
One Jehovah evermore!
Father! Son! and Spirit! we,
Dust and ashes, would adore.
Lightly by the world esteem'd,
From that world by Thee redeem'd,
Sing we here with glad accord,
Holy! Holy! Holy Lord!"

My soul! seek, in some feeble measure, to apprehend the nature of God's unbending hatred at sin! It is the deep, deliberate, innate opposition of His

nature to moral evil, which *requires* Him to hate it, and visit it with condign punishment. It is not so much a matter of *will* as of *necessity*.

But what pleasure can there be in the contemplation of so awful a theme? The contemplation of a God "of purer eyes than to behold iniquity" — "in whose sight the heavens are not clean!" —Jesus! thy adorable atonement is the mirror in which we can gaze unappalled on this august attribute! Thy cross is to the wide universe a perpetual monument and memorial of the Holiness of God. It proclaims, as nothing else could, "Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness!" Through that cross the Holiest of all beings becomes the most gracious of all. "Now, we can love Him," says a saint who has entered on his rest, "not only *although* He is holy, but *because* He is holy."

Gaze, and gaze again on that monumental column till it teaches the lesson.

how vain elsewhere to look for pardon! —how delusive that dream, on which multitudes peril their eternal safety, that "God will be at last too merciful to punish!" Surely, if any less awful vindication could have sufficed,—or had it been compatible with the Divine attributes to dispense pardon in any other way, Gethsemane and Calvary, with all their awful exponents of agony, would have been spared! The Almighty victim would not have voluntary submitted to a life of ignominy and a death of woe, if, by any simpler method, He could have "cleared the guilty." But this was impossible. If He was to "save others, Himself he *could* not save!"

Believer! let the attribute of Holiness be the superscription written on your heart and life. Abounding grace can give no sanction or encouragement to abound in sin. "His mercy," says Bishop Reynolds, "is a holy mercy which knows how to pardon sin, not to

protect it: it is a sanctuary for the penitent, not for the presumptuous."

My soul! art thou tempted to murmur under the dealings of thy God? What are the sorest of thy trials in comparison with what they *might* have been, had this Holy God left thee to know, in all the sternness of its meaning, how "Glorious He is in Holiness"? Rather marvel, considering thy sins, that thy trial has been so small—thy cross so light!

Blessed Jesus! into this sanctuary of "holy mercy" which thou hast opened for me, I will flee. I can now "give thanks at the remembrance of God's holiness!" Deriving, even from this august attribute, one of the "songs in the night"—

"I WILL BOTH LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE AND SLEEP; FOR THOU, LORD, ONLY MAKEST ME TO DWELL IN SAFETY!"

7TH NIGHT

"I meditate on Thee in the Night Watches."

'Justice and judgment are the habitation of Thy Throne.'
—Ps. lxxxix. 14.

Of Thy Justice.

THE Justice of God is "His Holiness in exercise." Let us repair to the spot marked out as the scene of its most awful manifestation. In the depths of a by-past eternity, the summons was heard, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man who is my Fellow!" That mysterious commission has been fulfilled! The Shepherd *has* been smitten! Myriads of condemned spirits could not have borne to God's inexorable rectitude so awful a testimony, as when, on the cross of Calvary, one lone voice sent up the wailing cry, "My God, my God, why hast *thou* forsaken me?"

My soul, rejoice! Justice, which erewhile demanded the execution of a

righteous doom upon millions *lost*, can now unite with Mercy in sheathing the avenging sword and exulting over myriads *redeemed*. The law which brought in a whole world "guilty before God," can exult with Mercy in seeing its every requirement obeyed, its every demand fulfilled; the Lawgiver Himself "the Just and yet the Justifier;" unloosing every chain of condemnation, and pronouncing "Not guilty!" "O Law!" says Luther, "I drown my conscience in the wounds, blood, death, resurrection, and victory of Christ."

Wondrous thought!—Justice, the very attribute which excluded the sinner, the first to throw open a door of welcome, proclaiming the infinite merit has cancelled infinite demerit—infinite holiness has covered infinite sin! While "justice and judgment are the habitation of His throne," provision has been made whereby, in perfect consistency with every principle of His moral govern-

ment, " mercy and truth may go continually before His face."

Reader, it is well for thee often and devoutly thus to dwell on the inflexible justice of thy God. It will magnify to thee the riches of His grace, the glories of redemption, the preciousness of Jesus! If the sinner is to be saved, "judgment *must* be laid to the line, and righteousness to the plummet!" "The Sinless One must be condemned," says Lefevre, "if he that is guilty is to go free. The Blessing must bear the curse, if the cursed are to be brought into blessing. The Life must die, if the dead are to live!" "In prayer in the evening," says Henry Martyn, "I had such near and terrific views of God's judgment upon sinners in hell, that my flesh trembled for fear of them. I flew trembling to Jesus Christ, as if the flames were taking hold of me. Oh! Christ will indeed save me, or else I perish!"

My soul! take hold of that touchingly

simple assurance to which Justice has appended its seal, "Whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish!"

"Not perish!" and Justice and a God of justice proclaiming so great salvation --safety from the terrors of a violated law—rest from the accusations of a guilty conscience—calmness in the prospect of death—Grace here—Glory hereafter! Oh! what more can that sinner need, or the sinner's God bestow!

"I WILL BOTH LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE AND SLEEP;
FOR THOU, LORD, ONLY MAKEST ME DWELL
IN SAFETY!"

8TH NIGHT.

"I meditate on Thee in the Night Watches."

"God is Love."—1 John iv. 16.

On Thy Love.

"THE only real mystery of the Bible," says an old writer, "is a mystery of Love." "God so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son!" What! that for a lost and ruined world, the Prince of Life should leave the bosom on which He had been pillowed from all eternity! and expire by an ignominious death on the bitter tree! Love unutterable! unspeakable! The reflection of the sceptic of a bygone age may have formed at times the musing of better minds. "It is far too great—it is far too good to be true!" Infinite majesty compassionating infinite weakness! The great Sun of heaven, the Fountain of uncreated light, undergoing an eclipse of darkness and blood for the sake of a taper that glimmered in nothingness in His beams. "God *so* loved the world."

Man never can get farther in the solution of the wondrous problem. Eternity itself will form a ladder—the saints climbing step by step in its ascending glories—but, as the prospect widens, each new altitude will elicit the same confession, "the Love of Christ, *which passeth knowledge.*"

My soul! seek to enter into the secrets of this love of thine adorable Redeemer. Before all time that love began. We have glimpses of it bursting out from the recesses of a bypast eternity—"Then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him, and I was daily His delight, rejoicing alway before Him!" And "when the fulness of the time was come," though foreseen were all His untold sufferings, nothing would deter Him from pursuing His anguished path—"He set His face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem;—nay, as if longing for the hour of victory, He exclaimed, "I have a baptism to be baptized with,

and how am I straitened until it be accomplished!"

Think of that love *now!*—the live coals in the censer of old—a feeble type of the burning ardor of affection still manifested by our Great High Priest within the veil, in behalf of His own people. There He bears the name of each indelibly engraven on His breastplate; "loving them at the beginning. He will love them even unto the end!" Earthly love may grow cold and changeable, or it may die. Not so the love of this "Friend of friends." It is strong as death—surviving death—nay, deathless as eternity. Listen to His own exponent of its intensity: "As the Father hath loved *me*, *so* have I loved *you!*" "You see in Him," says a pious writer, "an ocean of love without bottom, without bounds, overflowing the banks of heaven, streaming down upon this poor world to wash away the vileness of man!"

Blessed Jesus! how cold, and fitful, and transient has been my love to Thee in comparison of Thy love to me! Bring me more under its constraining influence! May this be the superscription on all my thoughts and my actions —my occupations and my time: "I am not my own — Lord, I am Thine!" How can I love Thee enough, who hast so loved me! My life shall henceforth be one thank-offering of praise for Thy redeeming mercies.

Standing this night on the shores of this illimitable ocean — surveying its length and breadth—every wave murmuring "Peace on earth and good-will to men"—

"I WILL BOTH LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE AND SLEEP
FOR THOU, LORD, ONLY MAKEST ME DWELL
IN SAFETY!"

9TH NIGHT.

"I meditate on Thee in the Night Watches."

"The God of all grace."—1 Peter, v. 10.

On thy Grace.

"By the Grace of God I am what I am!" This is the believer's eternal confession. Grace found him a rebel—it leaves him a son. Grace found him wandering at the gates of hell—it leaves him at the gates of heaven. Grace devised the scheme of Redemption. Justice never would. Reason never *could*. And it is Grace which carries out that scheme. No sinner would ever have sought his God but "by grace." The thickets of Eden would have proved Adam's grave had not *grace* called him out. Saul would have lived and died the haughty self-righteous persecutor had not *grace* laid him low. The thief would have continued breathing out his blasphemies had not *grace* arrested his tongue and tuned it for glory. "Out of the knottiest

timber," says Rutherford, "He can make vessels of mercy for service in the high palace of glory."

"I came, I saw, I conquered," says Toplady, "may be inscribed by the Saviour on every monument of grace. I *came* to the sinner; I *looked* upon him; and with a look of omnipotent love, I *conquered*."

My soul! thou wouldst have been this day a wandering star, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness—Christless—hopeless—portionless—had not grace invited thee, and grace constrained thee! And it is grace which at this moment, keeps thee. Thou hast often been a Peter—forsaking thy Lord, but brought back to Him again. Why not a Demas or a Judas? "*I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not.*" Is not this thine own comment and reflection on life's retrospect?—"Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me!"

Seek to realise thy continual dependence on this grace every moment. "More grace! more grace!" would need to be thy continual cry. But the infinite supply is commensurate with the infinite need. The treasury of grace, though always emptying, is always full: the key of prayer which opens it is always at hand; and the Almighty almoner of the blessings of grace is always "waiting *to be gracious!*" The recorded promise never can be cancelled or reversed —"My grace is sufficient for thee!"

Reader! seek to dwell much on this inexhaustible theme: The grace of God is the source of minor temporal as well as of higher spiritual blessings. It accounts for the crumb of daily bread as well as for the crown of eternal glory. But even in regard to earthly mercies, never forget the *channel* of grace—"*through* Christ Jesus!" It is sweet thus to connect *every* (even the smallest and humblest) token of providential

bounty with Calvary's cross—to have the common blessings of life stamped with "the print of the nails!" It makes them doubly precious to think, "This flows from Jesus!"

> "When with dear friends sweet talk I hold,
> And all the flowers of life unfold;—
> Let not my heart within me burn,
> Except in all I Thee discern!"

Let others be contented with the uncovenanted mercies of God. Be it mine to say, as the child of grace and heir of glory—"Our *Father* which art in heaven, give us this day our daily bread!" Nay, reposing in the "all-sufficiency in all things" promised by "the God of all grace,"

> "I WILL BOTH LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE AND SLEEP; FOR THOU, LORD, ONLY MAKEST ME DWELL IN SAFETY!"

10TH NIGHT.

"I meditate on Thee in the Night Watches."

"He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."—Isa. xi. 11.

On Thy Tenderness.

How soothing, in the hour of sorrow, or bereavement, or death, to have the countenance and sympathy of a tender earthly friend! My soul! these words tell thee of one nearer, dearer, tenderer still—the Friend that never fails—a tender God! By how many endearing epithets does Jesus exhibit the tenderness of His affection to His people! Does a shepherd watch tenderly over his flock? "The Lord is my Shepherd!" Does a father exercise fondest solicitude towards his children? "I will be a Father unto you!" Does a mother's love exceed all other earthly types of affectionate tenderness? "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you!" Is

the apple of the eye the most susceptible part of the most delicate bodily organ? "He keeps them as the apple of His eye!"

"He will not break the bruised reed!" When the "Shepherd and Bishop of Souls" finds the sinner like a lost sheep, stumbling on the dark mountains, how tenderly he deals with him! There is no look of wrath—no word of upbraiding—in silent love "He lays him on His shoulders rejoicing!"

When Peter falls, He does not unnecessarily wound him. He might have repeated often and again the piercing look which brought the flood of penitential sorrow. But He gave that look *only once;* and if He reminds him again of his threefold denial, it is by thrice repeating the gentlest of questions, "Lovest thou me?"

My soul! art thou mourning over the weakness of thy faith—the coldness of thy love—thy manifold spiritual declen-

sions? Fear not! He knows thy frame —He will give feeble faith tender dealing—He will "carry" in His arms those that are unable to walk, and will conduct the burdened ones through a path less rough and rugged than others. When "the Lion" or "the Bear" comes, thou mayest trust the true David, the tenderest of shepherds! Art thou suffering from outward trial? Confide in the tenderness of thy God's dealings with thee. The strokes of His rod are gentle strokes—the needed discipline of a father yearning over his children the very moment He is chastising them! The gentlest earthly parent may speak a harsh word at times—it may be, *needlessly* harsh. But not so GOD. "He may seem, like Joseph to his brethren, to speak roughly; but all the while there is love in His heart!" The pruning-hook will not be used unnecessarily. It will never cut too deeply. The furnace will not burn more fiercely than is

absolutely required. A *tender* God is seated by it, tempering the fury of its flames.

And what, believer, is the secret of all this tenderness? "*There is a man upon the Throne!*" Jesus—the God-Man Mediator: combining, with all the might of Godhead, all the tenderness of spotless humanity. Is thy heart crushed with sorrow?—so was His! Are thine eyes dimmed with tears?—so were His! "Jesus wept!" Bethany's "Chief Mourner" still wears the Brother's heart in glory. Others may be unable to enter into the depths of thy trial. He can—*He does!*

With such a "tender God" caring for me, providing for me, watching my path by day, and guarding my couch by night—

"I WILL BOTH LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE AND SLEEP;
FOR THOU, LORD, ONLY MAKEST ME DWELL
IN SAFETY!"

11TH NIGHT

"I meditate on Thee in the Night Watches."

"The God of Patience."—Rom. xv. 5.

On Thy Patience.

THERE is no more wondrous subject than this—"The Patience of God!" Think of the lapse of ages during which that patience has lasted—6000 years! Think of the multitudes who have been the subjects of it—Millions on millions, in successive climes and centuries! Think of the sins which have all that time been trying and wearying that patience—their number—their heinousness—their aggravation! The world's history is a consecutive history of iniquity, a lengthened provocation of the Almighty's forbearance! The Church, like a feeble ark, tossed on a mighty ocean of unbelief; and yet the world, with its cumberers, *still spared!* The cry of its sinful millions at this moment enter "the ears of the God of Sabaoth," and

yet, "for all this, His hand of mercy is stretched out still!"

And who is this God of patience? It is the Almighty Being who could strike these millions down in a moment!—who could, by a breath, annihilate the world!—nay, who would require no positive or visible forth-putting of His omnipotence to effect this, but simply to *withdraw* His sustaining arm!

Surely, of all the examples of the Almighty's power there is none more wondrous or amazing than "God's power over Himself." He is "slow to anger." "Judgment is His strange work." He "visits iniquity unto the third and fourth generation." He "shews mercy unto *thousands* of generations!" God bears for 1500 years, from Moses to Jesus, with Israel's unbelief; and yet, as a pious writer remarks, "He speaks of it as but a *day*:" "All day long have I stretched out my hands to a disobedient and gainsaying

people." What is the history of all this tenderness? "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord!"

My soul! how great has been God's patience towards *thee!* In thine unconverted state, when a wanderer from His fold, with what unwearied love He went after thee; notwithstanding all thy waywardness, never ceasing the pursuit "*until* He found thee!" Think of thy fainting and weariness since—thine ever-changing frames and feelings; the ebbings and the flowings in the tide of thy love, and yet, instead of surrendering thee to thine own perverse will, His language concerning thee is, "How can I give thee up?" For a lifetime, thy Saviour-God has been standing knocking at thy door; and his attitude is still the same—"Behold, *I stand!*"

"But fainter than the pole-star's ray
Before the noontide blaze of day,
Is all of love that man can know—
All that in angels' breasts can glow—

Compared, O Lord of hosts! with thine,
Unwearied! fathomless! Divine!"

How should the patience of Jesus lead me to be submissive under trial! When He has so long borne with me, shall not I "bear" with Him? When I think of *His* patience under a far heavier cross, can *I* murmur when *He murmured not?* Nay, I will check every repining thought, and looking up, in confiding affection, to "the God of all patience,"

"I WILL BOTH LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE AND SLEEP
FOR THOU, LORD, ONLY MAKEST ME DWELL
IN SAFETY!"

12TH NIGHT.

"I meditate on Thee in the Night Watches."

"Thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds."—Ps. xxxvi. 5.

On Thy Faithfulness.

IT has been well said, that "the universe around us is a parable of grace." "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so doth the Lord compass His people!" But firmer than even these types of immutability in the kingdom of nature is the word of a covenant-keeping God in the kingdom of grace. These mountains (nature's best emblems of steadfastness) may depart, and the hills be removed, "*but*," says their almighty Maker, "*my* kindness shall not be taken from thee!"

We can look upwards to the stars of night, and see the "faithfulness" of God "established" in the material heavens—"This day they stand as Thou ordainest!" But these are feeble types and symbols of brighter constellations in

the spiritual firmament—the declarations of an unchanging God—"*Thy word* is forever settled in heaven!"

What a gracious assurance amid our own unfaithfulness, "The Lord is faithful!"—that the unfaithfulness of the believer never alters, and *can* never alter, the faithfulness of God!

My soul! anchor thyself on this rock of the Divine veracity. Take hold of that blessed parenthesis which has been to many a tossed soul as a polar star in its nights of darkness—"Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them even unto the end." He loves them in life—loves them in death—loves them *through* death—loves them *into* glory!

Art thou not at this hour a monument of God's faithfulness? Where wouldst thou have been had not the magnet of His grace kept thee, and drawn thy fugitive affections towards Himself? From how many temptations has He rescued

thee—laying hold of thee on the precipice, when about to plunge headlong down—employing sometimes *constraining*, at others *restraining* grace—making this thy brief history, "*Kept* by the power of God," and overruling all—ALL for His own glory, and thine own good?

I love to think of Thy faithfulness, O thou "*Tried* stone," "laid in Zion!" Thou wert *tried* by the Law—by Justice—by Men—by Devils, and yet Thou wert faithful! Thou hast been *tried* by Prophets and Apostles; by Martyrs and Saints; by youthful sinners, and aged sinners, and dying sinners,—and Thou hast been found faithful *by* all and *to* all; and Thou art faithful still!

My soul! never suppose, amid the faithlessness of earth's trusted friends, that thou art doomed to thread thy way in loneliness and solitude; there is more than one Emmaus journey! The "Abiding" Friend is left! He is always the same! "He fainteth not, neither is

weary!" His faithfulness is a tried faithfulness! His word is a tried word! His friendship is a tried friendship! He is always "better than His word!" He pays with usury!

"Oh! who could bear life's stormy doom,
Did not Thy word of love
Come brightly bearing through the gloom
A peace-branch from above?
Then Sorrow, touch'd by Thee, grows bright,
With more than rapture's ray,
As darkness shows us worlds of light
We never saw by day!"

When I think that at THIS very moment the eye of that faithful Saviour-God is upon me—

"I WILL BOTH LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE AND SLEEP;
FOR THOU, LORD, ONLY MAKEST ME DWELL
IN SAFETY!"

13TH NIGHT.

"I meditate on Thee in the Night Watches."

"He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth."—Dan iv. 35.

On Thy Sovereignty.

How blessed that elementary truth—"The Lord reigneth!" To know that there is no chance or accident with God—that He decrees the fall of a sparrow—the destruction of an atom—the annihilation of a world!

The Almighty is not like Baal, "asleep." "He that keepeth Israel" can never for a moment "slumber." "Man *pro*poses—God *dis*poses." "*Thou* didst it!" is the history of every event, past, present, and to come. His purposes none can change—His counsels none can resist!

My soul! how cheering to know that all that befalls thee and thine is thus ordered in the eternal purpose of a Covenant God! Every minute circumstance of thy lot—appointing the bounds of thy

habitation—meting out every drop in the cup of life—arranging what by thee is called its "vicissitudes"—decreeing all its trials, and at last, as the great Proprietor of life, revoking the lease of existence when its allotted term has expired!

How it would keep the mind from its guilty proneness to brood and fret over second causes, were this grand but simple truth ever realised—that all that befalls us are integral parts in a stupendous plan of wisdom—that there is no crossing or thwarting the designs and dealings of God; none can say, "What doest thou?"—all *ought* to say, "He doeth all things well."

We dare not venture, with presumptuous gaze, to penetrate into "those secret things which belong unto the Lord our God." In all that is fitted in the consideration of this august theme of the Divine Decrees to impart encouragement and consolation, let us rejoice;

in all that is mysterious and incomprehensible, let us with childlike reverence exclaim, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!"

The contemplation of the Sovereignty of God formed subject-matter of rejoicing to the Saviour Himself in His humiliation: "Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in Thy sight!" And what supplied material for comfort and joy to an Almighty Sufferer, may well dry the tears and soothe the pangs of His suffering people.

O how sinners may magnify their God by a calm submission to His will, seeing no hand but *One* in their trials —in giving or taking: "The *Lord* gave — the *Lord* taketh away!" "Who knoweth not in all these things the hand of *the Lord* hath done this?"

"Till Death the weary spirit free,
My God hath said, 'Tis good for thee

To walk in faith, and not by sight.
Take it on trust a little while,
Soon shalt thou read the mystery right
In the full sunshine of His smile!"

Will it not further help to the breathing of the prayer, "Thy will be done,' when I think, in connection with the Sovereignty of God, of the grand end of His immutable decrees—"It is His own glory!" "*Of* Him and *through* Him, and *to* Him, are *all things*!" What more can I desire?—"all things." God's glory and my own good!—

"I WILL BOTH LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE AND SLEEP;
FOR THOU, LORD, ONLY MAKEST ME DWELL
IN SAFETY!"

14TH NIGHT.

"I meditate on Thee in the Night Watches."

"His kingdom ruleth over all."—Ps. ciii. 19.

On Thy Providence.

MY SOUL! try to see God in everything, and everything in God! Lose thine own will in His. Enter on no pursuit, engage in no plan, without Paul's prayer and condition, "If so the will of the Lord be." How it would hallow prosperity and sweeten adversity, thus, in all things, to follow like Israel the Guiding Pillar—at *His* bidding to pitch our tents—at *His* bidding to strike for march. Each providence has a voice, if we would only hear it. It is a finger-post in the journey, pointing us to "the *right* way, that we may go to the city of habitation!"

Often what a mystic volume Providence is!—its every page full of dark hieroglyphics, to which earth can furnish no key. But faith falls back on the assurance that "the Judge of all

the earth *must* do right"—the Father of all His people *cannot* do wrong. To the common observer, the stars in the nightly heavens are all confused masses pursuing devious and erratic courses. But to the astronomer each has its allotted and prescribed pathway, and all are preserving inviolate one universal law of harmony and order. It is faith's loftiest prerogative, patiently to wait till that day of disclosures, when page by page of the mystic book will be unravelled, and when the believer himself will endorse *every* page with, "It *is* well!"

Providences may even seem to be getting darker, merging like declining day into the shadows of twilight. But, contrary to nature, and to the Christian's expectations, "At *evening* time it shall be light!" The gathering cloud will then be seen to be fraught only with blessings which will burst on the Believer's head.

My soul! "be still, and know that He is God!" "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him." The mysterious "wherefore" thou hast so long been waiting for will soon be revealed. The long night-watch will soon terminate—in the long looked-for, longed-for morning!

"My God! My Father! while I stray
Far from my home on life's rough way.
O teach me from my heart to say—
Thy will be done!

Then when on earth I breathe no more
The prayer oft mixed with tears before
I'll sing, when on a happier shore—
Thy will be done!"

Blessed Lord! my pilgrimage path is studded thick with Ebenezers testifying to Thy faithfulness and mercy. I love to think of Thy manifold gracious interpositions in the past!—God sustaining me in trial—God supporting me in perplexity—God rescuing me when in temptation—God helping me when "vain was the help of man!" "When my

foot slipped, *Thy* mercy, O Lord, held me up!" And shall I not take all Thy goodness manifested hitherto as a pledge of faithfulness in the future? In full confidence of my God being a "rich Provider," I shall take no thought for the morrow but repose in this covenant assurance of a covenant-keeping God! —"I will never fail thee nor forsake thee!" "Thou hast *been* my help, *therefore* in the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice!"

"I WILL BOTH LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE AND SLEEP;
FOR THOU, LORD, ONLY MAKEST ME DWELL
IN SAFETY!"

15TH NIGHT

"I meditate on Thee in the Night Watches."

"Thy word is a lamp to my feet."—Ps. cxix. 105.

Thy Word.

MAN'S word disappoints—God's word, *never!* "The Word of the Lord is tried." It has been tried by the sinner; he neglected it and perished! It has been tried by the saint; he has believed it and been saved!

What a precious legacy of God to our world! The volume of nature, much as it teaches, is dumb on the question of a sinner's acceptance. The Scriptures alone can solve the enigma, "How is God to deal with the guilty?" That question unanswered—in peace we could not live, in peace we dared not die! But glad tidings, oh! precious messenger from God, hast thou brought to a doomed earth—"God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have everlasting

life!" Were there no more in this Divine communication than that *one* brief entry, the Bible would still be better to us than "thousands of gold and silver."

But it is a vast magazine and emporium of heavenly wisdom—free to all—suited for all—intended for all—offered to all;—an inexhaustible mine—the deeper you dig, the richer the ore. It has a word in season for rich and poor, young and old—for the wandering—the doubting—the sorrowing—the believing—the dying—the perishing! Reader! sit at the feet of Jesus in His Word, and with the docility of a little child, say, "Speak, Lord!" Approach it ever as if it met you with the living salutation, "I have a message from God for *thee!*" There are differences in every heart-chamber, but this key fits every door. Make it a faithful mirror, in which you see a reflection of *yourself*. The more faithfully it is held up, the

more will the sense of deficiency and defilement drive you to the atoning blood!

In all your difficulties, make it "the man of your counsel;" in all your perplexities, make it your interpreter and guide; in all your sorrows, make it your fountain of consolation; in all your temptations, make it your ultimate court of appeal. When venturing on debatable ground, let this deter thee—"What saith the Scripture?" When assailed, let this protect and defend thee—"It is written!"

Precious at all times, it is especially precious in "the dark and cloudy day." We may do without our beacon by day; but where are we without it in the midnight tempestuous sea? "I should have perished," says a sinking cast-away, "in mine affliction, but Thy *Word* hath quickened me."

"Oft as I lay me down to rest
O may the reconciling Word

Sweetly compose my weary breast;
While on the bosom of my Lord
I sink in blissful dreams away,
And visions of eternal day!"

Be it mine to look forward to that blessed time, when the intervention of that Word, and all other means of grace, will terminate, for in heaven "they need no candle!" Meanwhile, pillowing my head on the Word of the eternal God, and with these glorious prospects in view—

"I WILL BOTH LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE AND SLEEP;
FOR THOU, LORD, ONLY MAKEST ME DWELL
IN SAFETY!"

16TH NIGHT.

"I meditate on Thee in the Night Watches."

'With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation."—Isa. xii. 3.

On Thy Ordinances.

MY SOUL! thou art here far from thy true Home. A wilderness is thy place of sojourn; but Immanuel has provided wells in this Baca—this vale of weeping—for the refreshment of His pilgrims! In merciful adaptation to their weakness and wants, He has furnished means and instrumentality to keep alive the flame that would otherwise languish and decay. These are the golden pipes which convey the living water to the soul, fed by Christ himself from the great cistern of His own grace.

Reader! dost thou love the ordinances of God's appointment? Is the Sabbath to thee a holy and welcome season? Dost thou gladly respond to the summons, "Go ye up into the house of the Lord"? Hast thou felt that it is *there*

that "He commands the blessing, even life for evermore"? Or, holier ground still,—do you rejoice, as the solemn season comes round, to covenant afresh with your adorable Redeemer at His own table—to record anew your unalterable attachment to Him as your Lord and Master, and commemorate His dying, ever-living love?

See that it be not the reverse of all this. Do the hours of the Sabbath, once a delight—"day of all the week the best"—hang heavily upon you? Is prayer less a privilege than it was? Is the closet less habitually frequented? Is the fire burning with a sicklier glow on the domestic altar? Have the services of the sanctuary become more matter for the head than for the heart? Be assured these are lamentable symptoms of declension—tokens of a backward and downward state. "Ye *did* run well—who did hinder you?" Return forthwith to the deserted closet—

crucify forthwith the deadening sin. Hast thou not abjured it, over and over, at a communion table? Why suffer it again to have dominion over thee—robbing thee of all thy joy—extracting all relish from ordinances—impeding grace—grieving the Spirit? Lose no time in seeking restoration of lost filial nearness. "Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation." The lost Bride, in the Canticles, found her Lord beside the "Shepherds' tents;" and "*of Zion*, it shall be said, The Lord shall count, when He writeth up the people, that this man was born *there!*" Thou mayest sometimes have long to wait at the Gospel Bethesdas without any visible blessing; but, be assured, the Angel of the Covenant will in due time come down, and shew that He "is good to them that wait for Him—to the soul that seeketh Him!" "Wait, then, on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart!"

My soul! value ordinances, but do not *overvalue* them. Put not ordinances in the place of the God of ordinances. They are at best but the pole to hold up the brazen serpent upon—the scaffolding by which to get up beside the Chief corner-stone. "Hold *Thou* me up, and I shall be safe!" It is not the altar of God," but "God *Himself*," who is "the exceeding joy" of His people; and thus, even if wasting health and pining sickness should deprive me of outward ordinances, I may look upwards to that God who, though He "loves the gates of Zion," does not forget "the dwellings of Jacob," and say—

"I WILL BOTH LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE AND SLEEP;
FOR THOU, LORD, ONLY MAKEST ME DWELL
IN SAFETY!"

17TH NIGHT

"I meditate on Thee in the Night Watches."

"Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me."—Ps. li. 11.

On Thy Spirit.

"IT is expedient for you," said Jesus, "That I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you." How momentous must be the agency of the Holy Spirit, when the adorable Redeemer represented the blank of His own departure as being more than indemnified to His Church by the presence of this Divine Paraclete!

"It is the Spirit that quickeneth." It is He who is the agent in the new birth: "Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." It is He who enables the sinner by faith to lay hold on Jesus, and embrace His salvation: "No man can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." It is He who carries on the progressive work of holiness;—

we are saved "through sanctification of the Spirit." It is He who creates anew the lost image of the Godhead, impresses on the soul the lineaments of the Saviour's character—"We are transformed into the same image from glory to glory by the Lord the Spirit" (marg.) It is He who illumines the page of the Divine Record—acting like a telescope to the moral vision—disclosing in the firmament of inspiration "wondrous things" contained in the law, which the natural eye cannot see. It is He who unfolds the glories of the Redeemer's work—the beauties of His person—the completeness of His sacrifice—the riches of His grace;—"He shall glorify Me; for He shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." Nay, the soul of the believer becomes itself a temple of the Holy Ghost! Oh! with what holy jealousy would the child of God guard every avenue to temptation, if this amazing truth exercised its habitual

and solemnizing power over him—"The Spirit of God dwelleth within me!" How would he avoid anything and every thing by which he would be likely to "grieve" this blessed Agent, "whereby he is sealed until the day of redemption!"

"Behold!" He seems to say, "I make all things new." The initial operation is His—He broods over the face of the spiritual chaos, saying, "Let there be light." The closing and consummating grace is His,—He conducts the spirit through the swellings of Jordan, till it joins with the ransomed multitude before the throne, in ascribing to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the glories of a completed salvation.

"Take not, then, O God! thy Holy Spirit from me." In vain are the word, ordinances, sacraments, sermons, prayers, without Him. All are in themselves passive instruments; His is the omnipotent arm which wields and vanquishes.

Our adorable Redeemer—the great High Priest—was Himself anointed with the Holy Spirit. That anointing oil, poured upon the Church's living Head, "runs down to the skirts of His garment," anointing, as it flows, all His members, and those that are lowest and humblest—(nearest the skirts)—receive the most!

My soul! if this be thy position—at the feet of Jesus—the blessed influences of the Holy Spirit, streaming down upon thee in copious effusion, sanctifying thee more and more, and making thee more meet for glory—then thou mayest well say, night after night, until the day spring of that glory burst upon thee—

"I WILL BOTH LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE AND SLEEP;
FOR THOU, LORD, ONLY MAKEST ME DWELL
IN SAFETY!"

18TH NIGHT.

"I meditate on Thee in the Night Watches."

"All the promises of God in Him are Yea, and in Him Amen."—2 Cor. i. 20.

On Thy Promises.

GOD has made a Will, or Testament, in behalf of His people! It is signed and sealed. It cannot be altered—nothing can denude us of our patrimony. The bequest is His own "exceeding great and precious promises." What a heritage!—All that the sinner requires—all that the sinner's God can give. In this testamentary deed there are no contingencies, no peradventures. The testator commences it with the sure guarantee for its every jot and tittle being fulfilled, "Verily, verily, *I* say unto you!" He endorses every promise and every page, with a "Yea, and Amen." "God, willing more abundantly to shew to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath!"

But who provided such a rich Promise

Treasury? What is the source, where the fountain-head, from which these streams of mercy flow to the Church? "*In* HIM." Believer! *from* Jesus every promise is derived — *in* Jesus every promise centres! Pardon, peace, adoption, consolation, eternal life—all "in Him." In *Him* you are "chosen," "called," "justified," "sanctified," "glorified." You have in possession all the blessings of present grace; you have in reversion all the happiness of coming glory: and "He is *faithful* that promised!" Your friend may deceive thee —the world *has* deceived you—He never will! Myriads in glory are there to tell how "not one thing hath failed of all that the Lord their God hath spoken." Rely on this faithfulness—He gave His Son for you. After the greater blessing, surely for subordinate ones you may trust Him.

And where do these promises beam most brightly? Like the stars. it is in

the night! In the midnight of trial—when the sun of earthly prosperity has set—when deep is calling to deep, and wave to wave; when tempted, bereaved, beaten down with "a great fight of afflictions"—the spiritual firmament, with its galaxy of Promises, will be brightest and clearest!

"Oh! who could bear life's stormy doom,
Did not Thy Word of Love
Come brightly bearing through the gloom
A palm-branch from above?
Then sorrow touch'd by Thee grows bright,
With more than rapture's ray;
As darkness shews us worlds of light
We never saw by day!"

But be not deceived; the night of sorrow cannot in itself give you the comfort of the Divine Promises. It may be night, and yet the stars invisible. It is only "in *Him*" these promises can be discerned in their lustre. My soul! if "out of Christ," these stars of Gospel promise shine in vain to thee; they have to the unspiritual eye no beauty

or brightness. In the midnight battle of Barak, "the stars in their course fought against Sisera." They shone on Israel, but denied their light to the enemies of God. The guiding pillar, so lustrous to the chosen people, was a column of portentous gloom to Pharaoh's host.

But "*in Him*," as "heirs of God," ye are inheritors of "all the promises." *All* the promises! Oh! with such a pillow whereon to rest your aching head, you may well resume your nightly song—

"I WILL BOTH LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE AND SLEEP;
FOR THOU, LORD, ONLY MAKEST ME DWELL
IN SAFETY!"

19TH NIGHT.

"I meditate on Thee in the Night Watches."

" And that will by no means clear the guilty."—
Exodus xxxiv. 7.

On Thy Warnings

"HE is faithful that *promised.*" Do we bear sufficiently in mind another equal fidelity—"He is faithful" that *threatened?* My soul! ponder that solemn word, "who will *by no means* clear!" Remember *when* that word was spoken: it was in connexion with a sublime apocalypse of God's majesty. It was as "the '*glory*' of the Lord" was passing before Moses! Was not this intended to show that there is an awful and inseparable connexion between the Divine glory and the impossibility of God's clearing the guilty? It was at a time, moreover, when the *benignity* of God was intended to be more specially manifested. It was when He was declared to be "the Lord, the Lord God, merciful, gracious, long-suffering, abun-

dant in goodness." *Then* it was, we listen to the awful note of warning, that "clear the guilty" He *will* not, and *cannot!* His law requires—the honour of His throne requires—*demands* that the guilty be "*not* cleared."

Reader! art thou still clinging to the dream of final mercy? Dost thou believe in the first part of the Divine proclamation at Sinai, and persist in presumptuous and fatal scepticism with regard to the last?—that, boundless in His resources, and infinite in His love, God *will* by *some* means "clear the guilty"?

Be not deceived! See that ye do not incur the woe of him who "striveth with his Maker!" The Lord, who "is not slack concerning His promises," can be as little slack concerning His threatenings. Time blunts the wrath of man, and chastens and subdues the turbulence of his passions; but there is no blind impulse—no vacillation in Him with

whom "a thousand years are as one day." "God's threatenings," says a writer, "are God's doings!" The law has not one breathing of mercy for you. There is not one cleft in all Mount Sinai where you can escape the vengeance of the storm! Unless you flee without delay to Him who *has* "cleared the guilty" by Himself—the Guiltless—becoming the guilt-bearer, be assured that through eternity "you will *by no means* be cleared."

My soul! art thou yet in this state of perilous estrangement? still launched on the cheerless ocean of uncertainty, leaving everything to a dying hour, the time to which nothing should be left, *but* to die! Ponder these living words of unchanging truth—"Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not escape unpunished." The golden chain of grace stretches from heaven to earth, but it can go no further—"Seek ye the Lord *while* He may be found." "*While!*"

There is solemn warning in that one word! It tells thee there is a day coming when the Lord will be sought, but will *not* be "found."

"Time's sun is fast setting—its twilight is nigh-
Its evening is falling in cloud o'er the sky;
Its shadows are stretching in ominous gloom;
Its midnight approaches—the midnight of doom!
Then haste, sinner, haste, there is mercy for thee,
And wrath is preparing—flee, lingerer, flee!"

Reader! cast thyself this night at His footstool; implore His mercy. Rise not from thy bended knees, until, with His propitiated smile gladdening thee, and the hope of His heaven cheering thee, thou mayest (it may be for the first time in thy life) lie down with a quiet conscience and a pardoned soul on thy nightly couch, exclaiming—

"I WILL BOTH LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE AND SLEEP;
FOR THOU, LORD, ONLY MAKEST ME DWELL
IN SAFETY!"

20TH NIGHT.

"I meditate on Thee in the Night Watches."

"For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth."—Heb. xii. 6.

On Thy Chastisements.

CHASTISEMENT! — The family badge—the family pledge—the family *privilege!*—"To you it is *given* to *suffer*." "Troubles," says a good man, "are in God's catalogue of mercies." Afflictions," says another, "are God's hired labourers to break the clods and plough the land."

Believer! is the hand of thy God heavy upon thee? Has He been breaking thy cisterns, withering thy gourds, poisoning thy sweetest fountains of earthly bliss? Are the world's bright spots outnumbered by the dreary? Has one tear been following another in quick succession? Thou mayest have to tell, perhaps, of a varied experience of trials. Every tender point touched—sickness, bereavement, poverty—ALL! Be still!

If thou art a child of God, there is no exemption from the "household discipline." The rod is a father's; the voice that speaks may be rough, but the hand that smites is gentle. The furnace may be seven times heated, but the Refiner is seated by. His object is not to consume, but to purify. Do not misinterpret His dealings; there is mercy on the wings of "the rough wind." Our choicest fountains are fed from dark lowering clouds. All, be assured, will yet bear the stamp of love. Sense cannot discern yet "the bright light in the clouds." Aged Jacob exclaimed at first, "All these things are against me;" but at last he had a calmer and a juster verdict, "His spirit revived!" "At evening time it was light." The saint on earth can say, regarding his trials, in faith and in trust, "I *know*, O Lord, that Thy judgments are right." The saint in glory can go a step farther, "I *see*, O Lord, that they are so!" His

losses will then be shewn to be his riches. Believer! on a calm retrospect of thy heaviest afflictions—say, were they unneeded? Was this (what Augustine calls) "the severe mercy of God's discipline"—was it *too* severe? Less would not have done. Like Jonah, thou never wouldst have awoke but for the storm! He may have led thee to a Zarephath ("a place of furnaces"), but it is to shew thee there "one like unto the Son of God!" When was God ever so near to thee, or thou to thy God, as in the furnace-fires? When was the presence and love and sympathy of Jesus so precious? When "the Beloved" comes down from "the Mountain of Myrrh"—the "Hill of Frankincense" —to His "Garden on Earth," He can get no fragrance from some plants but by bruising them. The spices in the Temple of old were *bruised*. The gold of its candlestick was *beaten* gold! It was when the Marah-fountain of thy

heart was bitter with sin, that he cast in some cross—some trial—and "the waters were made sweet!"

My soul, be still! Thou hast in affliction one means of glorifying God, which even angels have not in a sorrowless world:—*Patience* under the rod—*Submission* to thy Heavenly Father's will! Pray not to have thine affliction removed, but for grace to bear up under it, so that thou mayest glorify God even "in the fires;" and, remembering that though "weeping endureth for a night, joy cometh in the morning," close thy tearful eyes, saying—

"I WILL BOTH LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE AND SLEEP;
FOR THOU, LORD, ONLY MAKEST ME DWELL
IN SAFETY!"

21st Night.

"I meditate on Thee in the Night Watches."

"Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."—John vi. 37.

On Thy Invitations.

In no wise! How broad is the door of welcome! "God," says a holy writer, "is like one on his knees, with tears in his eyes, and extreme fervour in his soul, beseeching the sinner to be saved!" He met the prodigal son half-way. Ere the ungrateful wanderer could stammer forth through penitential tears the confession of his sins, the arms of mercy were around him. The prodigal thought of no more than the menial's place: the Father had in readiness the best robe and the fatted calf! "There is no such argument," says Bishop Reynolds, "for our turning to God, as His turning to us." He has the first word in the overtures of mercy. He refuses none—He welcomes all!—The poor—the wretched—the blind—the naked—the burdened

—the heavy-laden ;—the hardened sinner—the aged sinner—the daring sinner—the dying sinner—ALL are invited to the conference : " Come now, and let us reason together!" The most parched tongue that laps the streams from the smitten rock has everlasting life! "When *we* forgive, it costs us an effort; when God forgives, it is His delight." From the battlements of heaven He is calling after us: "Turn ye! turn ye! Why will ye die?" He seems to wonder if sinners have pleasure in their own death. He declares, "*I have none!*"

Reader! have you yet closed with the Gospel's free invitations? Have you gone *just as you are*—with all the raggedness of Nature's garments—standing in your own nothingness—feeling that you are insolvent—that you have "nothing to pay"—*already* a bankrupt, and the debt always increasing? Have you taken hold of that blessed assurance, "He is able to save unto the *uttermost*"?

Are you resting your eternal all on Him who has done all and suffered all for you; leaving you, "without money and without price," a free, full, unconditional offer of a great salvation? Say not your sins are too many—the crimson dye too deep. It is because you are a great sinner, and have great sins, that you need a great Saviour. "*Of whom I am the chief*," is a golden postscript to the "faithful saying."

Do not dishonour God by casting doubts on His ability or willingness. If your sins are heinous, you will be all the greater monument of grace. You may be the weakest and unworthiest of vessels; but, remember, there was a niche in the temple for great and for small—for "vessels of cups" as well as for "vessels of flagons;"—ay, and *the smallest vessel glorifies Christ!*

Arise! then, call upon thy God! We cannot say, with the king of Nineveh, "Who can tell if God will turn?" He

is "turning" *now*—importunately pleading and averring, on His own immutable word, that He will "*in no wise* cast out!" "Though ye have lien among the pots, ye shall be as doves, whose wings are covered with silver, and their feathers with yellow gold!" Close without delay with these precious invitations, that, so looking up to a reconciled God and Father in heaven, you may even this night say—

"I WILL BOTH LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE AND SLEEP;
FOR THOU, LORD, ONLY MAKEST ME DWELL
IN SAFETY!"

22D NIGHT.

"I meditate on Thee in the Night Watches."

"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God!"—Isa. xl. 1.

On Thy Consolations.

GOD'S people are often apt to be "*discouraged* because of the way." In the bitterness of their spirits, they are often apt to say, with desponding Zion, "The Lord hath forsaken me;" or with the faithless prophet, "It is better for me to die than to live."

But the Christian has his *consolations* too, and they are "strong consolations." The "still small voice" mingles with the hurricane and the storm. The bush burns with fire, but the Great God is in the bush, and therefore it is indestructible! "The Lord liveth, and blessed be my rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted!" Earthly consolations may help to dry one tear, but another is ready to flow: God dries all.

There is no want in the aching voids of the sinner's heart but He can supply.

Is it mercy to pardon? I can look up to the throne of the most high God, and see Holiness and Righteousness, and Justice and Truth, all bending in exulting harmony over my ruined soul, exclaiming, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners!"

Is it grace to help? I can look up to that same throne, and behold seated thereon a Great High Priest; nay, a mighty "Prince, having power with God, and prevailing"—"prayer without ceasing" ascending from His lips in behalf of His people. When Satan seeks "to sift" them on earth, His upholding power protects them in heaven! When temptation assails them in their earthly conflicts, the true Moses on the Mount, with hands that never "grow heavy," makes them "more than con-

querors." When trial threatens to prostrate them, He identifies Himself with the sufferers—He points to His own sorrows, to show them how light the heaviest of earth's sorrows are! Even over the gloomy portals of the grave He can write, "Blessed are the dead!" He alone felt Death's substance —His people only "see the shadow." He makes it a "Valley of Achor," through which "the two spies, Faith and Hope," fetch back Eshcol-pledges of the True Land of Promise!

My soul! art thou now weary, or desponding? Is some cross heavy on thee—some trial oppressing thee—some thorn in the flesh sorely lacerating thee? Be still! He will make His "grace sufficient for thee." If He has allured thee into the wilderness, it is that He may speak comfortably unto thee. He has an antidote for every bosom—a balm for every heart—a comfort for every pang—a solace for every

tear. "In the multitude of my thoughts within me, Thy comforts delight my soul!"

"'Tis my happiness below
Not to live without the cross,
But the Saviour's power to know,
Sanctifying every loss.

"Trials must and will befall;
But with humble faith to see
Love inscribed upon them all—
This is happiness to me!

"Trials make the promise sweet,
Trials give new life to prayer,
Trials bring me to His feet,
Lay me low, and keep me there!"

"I WILL BOTH LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE AND SLEEP;
FOR THOU, LORD, ONLY MAKEST ME DWELL
IN SAFETY."

23D NIGHT.

"I meditate on Thee in the Night Watches."

"All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep His covenant and His testimonies."—Ps. xxv. 10.

On Thy Paths.

"ALL THE PATHS!" It is no small effort of faith to say so —when blessings are blown upon and schemes crossed, and fellow-pilgrims (it may be beloved helpmeets in our spiritual joys) mysteriously removed—to say, "All—ALL is mercy!—All—ALL is well!"

But they are "the paths of *the Lord*" —His choosing; and be assured He will "lead His people by a right way." It may not be the way of their own selecting. It may be the very last they would have chosen. But when He leadeth His sheep, "*He goeth before them!*" The Shepherd stakes off our pasture-ground. He guides "the footsteps of the flock." He will lead them by no rougher way than He sees needful. Does a father give his child his own way? If he did,

it would be his ruin. Will God surrender us to our own truant wills, which are bent on nothing so much as wandering farthest from the Shepherd? He knows us better—He *loves us better!*

My soul! it is the loftiest triumph and prerogative of faith to have no way—no path of thine own—but with childlike simplicity and reliance to say, "Teach me *Thy* paths!" "Undertake *Thou* for me!" Lead me *howsoever* and *wheresoever* Thou pleasest. Let it be through the darkest, loneliest, thorniest way—only let it bring me nearer *Thyself.*

"O tell me, thou life and delight of my soul,
Where the flock of Thy pasture are feeding;
I seek Thy protection, I need thy control;
I would go where my Shepherd is leading.
O tell me the place where thy flocks are at rest,
Where the noontide will find them reposing!
The tempest now rages, my soul is distrest,
And the pathway of peace I am losing!"

O that we could keep our eye not so much on the path, as on the bright wicket-gate which terminates it! When

standing at that luminous portal, we shall trace, with adoring wonder, the way in which our God has led us, discerning the "need-be" of every tear-drop;—and to the question, "Is it well?" to which often on earth we gave an evasive answer, ready with an unhesitating, "It *is* well!" What a light will then be flashed on these three oft mysterious words, "God is love!" Then, at least, shall we be able to add the joyful comment—"We have known and *believed* the love which God hath to us!"

Meanwhile, my soul! if thou art treading a path of sorrow, consider, as an encouragement, that thy Lord and Master trod the same before thee. Behold! as He toils on his blood-stained journey, how submission to the Divine will forms the secret of His support. "Even so, Father!" "Not my will, but Thine be done!" The True David was strengthened with what sustained His typical ancestor in a dark and try-

ing hour: "O Lord, thou art *My God!*" Believer! if it be *thy* God in covenant who is leading thee, what more canst thou require? "His ways are verity and judgment:" "He will guide thee, while thou livest, by His counsel, and afterward receive thee into His glory!" My God! if such be the design of thy dealings and discipline,—

"I WILL BOTH LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE AND SLEEP;
FOR THOU, LORD, ONLY MAKEST ME DWELL
IN SAFETY!"

24TH NIGHT.

"I meditate on Thee in the Night Watches."

"The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will show them his covenant."—Ps. xxv. 14.

On Thy Secret.

MY SOUL! thy God has some mighty Secret to confide to thee! What is this, which (a mystery to the world) is to be conveyed in whispers into the ears of His people? "*He will shew them His Covenant!*"

Listen this night to this blessed "secret." Thou hast pondered it oft before. But its wonders never diminish by repetition.

The *Author* of it is God—the Eternal Father. He framed its articles before the foundation of the world. It is an inverted order of truth that would represent the atonement as the cause of God's love: that love was rather the originating cause of the atonement—"God so loved the world!" How runs the Covenant-Charter?—"All things are yours! Ye are Christ's!" "Christ

is *God's!*" The initiative—the first overture of covenant-mercy—was with Him. It was the insulted Sovereign who first dreamt of clemency towards the rebels—the injured Father who first thought of His ungrateful children! Wondrous secret!—that from all eternity the Heart of God was to us *all Love!*

Think of the *Surety* of the Covenant! It was the adorable Son of the Father! He voluntarily closed with the Covenant stipulations: "Lo, I come! I delight to do Thy will, O my God!" He ceased not until, all the terms being fulfilled, He could claim His stipulated reward: "I have glorified Thee on the earth, I have finished the work which Thou gavest *Me* to do!" And still He lives, and reigns, and intercedes under the blessed title of "Mediator of the Everlasting Covenant!"

Think of the Almighty Dispenser of the blessings of the Covenant.—It is

the Spirit of all Grace—the third person in the ever-blessed, co-equal Trinity! Think of the *Heirs* of the Covenant. They are all who, by simple faith, are willing to appropriate its inestimable blessings! Think of the *Security* of the Covenant. There is nothing but contingency in other things—all is certainty here: "I will be unto you a God, and ye shall be to me a people!" Sure! it has the rock of Christ's Deity to rest upon, and a Triune God pledged to make good all its provisions—"My covenant will I not break, nor alter the word that has gone out of my mouth!" Think of the *Perpetuity* of the Covenant: "I will betroth thee unto me *for ever!*" Think of the rich *Inheritance* of the Covenant. Oh! here is the mighty secret of unfathomable love: "If children, then Heirs—*Heirs of God.*" "Heirs of God!"—all within the compass of Omnipotence to bestow! "God," says Bishop Beveridge, "thus

speaks, I AM that I AM! He puts His hand to a blank, that His people may write under it what they please that is for their good:—He simply saying, in the general, 'I *AM!*'"

My soul! art thou an heir of God? Canst thou look upwards to the throne of that Great "*I Am*," and say, "*My God*"? Happier words—a more glorious assurance—cannot thrill on an archangel's tongue! With such a Portion, surely I am independent of all others. Let that amazing "secret" form the last thought of this day; and, as the Almighty is even now whispering it in my ears, I may close my eyes, repeating—

"I WILL BOTH LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE AND SLEEP;
FOR THOU, LORD, ONLY MAKEST ME DWELL
IN SAFETY!"

25TH NIGHT

"I meditate on Thee in the Night Watches."

"The name of the Lord is a strong Tower; the Righteous runneth into it, and is safe."—Prov. xviii. 10.

On Thy Name.

STRONG indeed! "Salvation is for walls and for bulwarks." Every attribute of Godhead is such a tower—every perfection such a Bulwark—all combined to insure the Believer's everlasting security.

My soul! "walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark well her bulwarks, consider her palaces!" Mark the strong Tower of *Omnipotence!* It proclaims that Almightiness is on thy side—that there is *ONE with* thee and *for* thee, boundless in His resources, greater far than all that can be against thee!

Mark the strong Tower of *Unchangeableness!* All earthly fabrics are tottering and crumbling around thee—the

dearest of all thine earthly refuges has written on it the doom of the dust. But, sheltered here, thou canst gaze unawed on all the fitful changes of life, and exult in an unchanging God!

Mark the strong Tower of *Wisdom!* When dealings are dark, and chastisements mysterious, dost thou know what it is to retire within this fortress, and to be reminded that all, *all* that befalls thee is the planning of unerring rectitude and faithfulness?—to see inscribed on the chamber-walls, "The only Wise God"?

Mark the strong Tower of *Love!* When the hurricane has been fierce—thy heart breaking with new trials—the past dark—the future a dreary waste—no lull in the storm—no light in the clouds—oh! is it no comfort to thee to retire into this most hallowed of bulwarks, and read the living motto—emblazoned on its every turret—"God is love?"

My soul! art thou safe in this impregnable fortress? Hast thou entered *within* the gate? Remember, it is not to be "*near*" the city, but *in* it. Not to know *about* Christ, but to "win Him, and be found *in* Him!" One footstep without, and the Avenger of blood can cut thee down!

"Turn, then, to the stronghold" as a "prisoner of hope!" Once, these were colossal walls to exclude. Now, they are unassailable barriers to protect—a citadel where His saints are "kept" by the power of God. Every portal is open; and the God of Mercy issues the gracious proclamation—"Come, my people, enter into thy chambers!"

How safe—how happy here! "If there be tossing and doubting, it is the heaving of a ship at anchor—not the dashing on the rocks."—(EVANS.) In God! "There is, in this," says President Edwards, speaking of the same blessed truth, "secured to me, as it were.

a calm, sweet cast, or appearance, of glory in almost everything." We can hear, amid the surges of life, a voice high above the storm—the Name of the Lord —"It is *I!*" "It is *I!*" remarks Bishop Hall, "were as much as a hundred names. It is I!—I! your Lord and Master. I! the Commander of winds and waters. I! the Sovereign Lord of Heaven and Earth. *I!* the God of Spirits. Let Heaven be but as one Scroll, and let it be written all over with titles—they cannot express more than—It is I! Oh! sweet and seasonable word of a gracious Saviour!—able to calm all tempests—able to revive all hearts—say but so to my Soul, and I am safe!"

"I WILL BOTH LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE AND SLEEP;
FOR THOU, LORD, ONLY MAKEST ME DWELL
IN SAFETY!"

26TH NIGHT.

"I meditate on Thee in the Night Watches."

"In Thy favour is life."—Ps. xxx. 5.

On Thy Favour.

How anxious are we to stand well with our fellow-men, and secure *their* favour! are we equally so to stand well with God? The favour of man, what is it?—A passing breath, which a moment may alienate, a look forfeit, and which, at best, a few brief years will forever terminate. But the favour of GOD—how ennobling, constant, and enduring! In possession of that favour, we are independent alike of what the world gives and withholds. *With* it, we are rich, whatever else we want. *Without* it, we are poor, though we have the wealth of worlds beside. Bereft of Him, we can truly say with aged Jacob, I *am* bereaved." Nothing can compensate for *His* loss, but *He* can compensate for the loss of every thing!

"Thou art, O God, the life and light
Of all this wondrous world we see;
Its glow by day, its smile by night,
Are but reflections caught from Thee!
Where'er we turn, Thy glories shine,
And all things fair and bright are Thine."

My soul! art thou living a stranger to this favour, under the cheerless sense of alienation from God? Sin uncancelled—peace unpurchased—all uncertainty about the question of thine eternity? Who need ask, living thus, if thou art satisfied, or happy? *Satisfied!* Impossible—*nothing* can satisfy thine infinite capacities but the infinite God. Nothing can fill up the aching voids of thine immortal being but Him "who only hath immortality." *Happy!* impossible, too. There can be no happiness with sin unforgiven—the conscience unappeased—imperishable interests hanging overhead unsettled and unadjusted—death, and judgment, and eternity, all unprovided for! Living at this "dying rate," peace must be a stranger to your bosom!

Seek to make up your peace with God. Covet His life-giving favour. What a blessed fountain of unsullied joy has that soul which can look up to Heaven and say, "God is mine!" That word—that *thought*—wipes away every tear-drop, "My Father!" What though the perishable streams be dried, if thou art driven to learn the truth, "All my well-springs are in *Thee*"? He may empty thy cistern, but the Fountainhead remains. Job was the sorest of sufferers, but he could bear patiently to be bereft of all, save *One*—"Oh that I knew where I might find *Him!*" "Go," said Chrysostum, exulting in this favour of the King of kings, when an earthly princess tried to shake his spirit—"Go, tell her that I fear nothing but sin." Blessed state of conscious security!

"If THOU art mine, Eternal God!
Let fraud or malice, storm or flood,
Bear all besides away;
The soul's best treasure lies too deep
For spoiler's arm, or fortune's sweep,
Or time's more sure decay!

"Death, that all meaner bliss destroys,
Robs not the spirit of its joys;
And if his stroke can sever
The fleshly seal, 'tis but to bring
The living waters from their spring,
And bid them gush forever."

The same mighty consolation which supported Jesus in His season of humiliation, forms the solace and rejoicing of His true people—"Because He is on my right hand, I shall not be moved." Blessed Jesus! do Thou encompass me this night with Thy favour as with a shield, and then

"I WILL BOTH LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE AND SLEEP;
FOR THOU LORD, ONLY MAKEST ME DWELL
IN SAFETY!"

27TH NIGHT

"I meditate on Thee in the Night Watches."

"They shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my Jewels."—Mal. iii. 17.

On Thy Jewels.

"MY JEWELS!" (*marg.* My peculiar treasure.) Of what favoured created beings does Jehovah thus speak? Is it of seraphs? —of angels? Methinks at such a title even *they* would take the dust of abasement, and, veiling their faces, cry, "Unclean! unclean!" But, marvel of marvels!—It is redeemed sinners of the earth—the fallen children of men, once rude, unshapely stones, lying in "the horrible pit and the miry clay," amid the rubbish of corruption, who are thus sought out by grace, purchased by love, destined through eternity to be set as *jewels* in the crown of the eternal God!

"The Lord's portion is His people!" There is a surpassing revelation of love here! Great, unspeakably great, is the privilege of the Believer, to be able to

look up to the everlasting Jehovah, and say, "Thou art *my* portion, O Lord!" But what is this in comparison with the response of Omnipotence to the child of dust, "*Thou art Mine!*"

My soul! hast thou learnt to lisp thy part in this wondrous interchange of covenant love, "My beloved is mine, and I am His"? What an array of wondrous titles belong to the saints of God, and given, too, by God himself in His own Word! "He calls them Sons as often as sinners!" Brethren! Princes! Friends! Heirs! Jewels! Portion! "*Mine*"!

And *when* is the time when they become thus dear to Him? Sinner! when thou didst weep at the cross of Jesus, and joined thyself in covenant with God, thou becamest His *Jewel!* Nay, "He has loved thee with an everlasting love!" True, thou art not yet set in His crown; thou art yet undergoing the process of polishing. Affliction is preparing thee; trial is needed to remove all the rough-

ness and inequalities of nature, and make thee meet for thy Master's use. But, blessed thought! "He that hath *wrought* us [literally, *chisselled* or *polished* us] for the self same thing is *God!*" Yes, God himself, the possessor, who prized that earthly jewel so much as to give in exchange for it Heaven's "Pearl of great price!" *He* has the polishing in His own hand. He will not deal too rashly or roughly!

And where, meanwhile, is the casket in which these Jewels are kept till the coronation-day arrives, when the crown of His Church triumphant (every saint a gem) will be placed on the head of Jesus? It is He, their Purchaser, their Proprietor, who preserves them. They are "kept by the power of God." Our great High Priest, the true Aaron, has them set in His breastplate; He bears them on His heart on His every approach to the throne. They are the precious stones set in gold upon the ephod, and

though the sins of His people, and the designs of Satan, combine in doing what they can to erase and destroy them, He declares that none shall ever pluck them out of His hand or from His heart!

A jewel in Immanuel's crown!—Not only raised from the dunghill to be set among princes, but to gem through eternity the forehead that for me was once wreathed with thorns! Shall I—*can* I—murmur at any way my Saviour sees meet to polish and prepare me for such an honour as this?

Let me sink down on my nightly pillow overpowered with the thought; and as I hear my covenant God whispering in my ear the astounding accents, "*Thou art Mine!*" I may well reply,

"I WILL BOTH LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE AND SLEEP;
FOR THOU, LORD, ONLY MAKEST ME DWELL
IN SAFETY!"

28TH NIGHT.

"I meditate on Thee in the Night Watches."

"We must all appear before the Judgment-seat of Christ!"
—2 Cor. v. 10

On Thy Judgments.

"ALL!" There is no eluding that searching scrutiny — "Every eye shall see Him!" My soul! if safe in the covenant, there is to thee no terror in that coming reckoning. The *judicial* dealing between thyself and thy God is already past. Thou art already acquitted. The moment thou didst cast thyself at the cross of thy dear Lord, the sentence of "Not Guilty" was pronounced upon thee; and "it is God that justifieth: who is he that condemneth?" But this sentence will be ratified and openly proclaimed before an assembled world. On that great day of disclosures God will avenge His own elect. All the calumnies and aspersions heaped on their character will be wiped away. And in presence of devils,

and angels, and men, the approving sentence will go forth from the lips of the Omniscient One, "Enter ye into the joy of your Lord."

And who is to be thy Judge? Who is to be enthroned on that tribunal of unerring rectitude, before whom every knee is to bow and every heart is to be laid open? "He hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness *by that Man* whom He hath ordained!" "*That Man!*" Oh! it is no stranger! It is He who died for thee; who is now interceding for thee; who will then stand on that latter day on the earth to espouse thy cause, vindicate thine integrity, and utter the challenge to every reclaiming adversary, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?"

My soul! seek to know this God-Man Mediator on a throne of grace, ere you meet Him on a throne of judgment! Seek to have your name now enrolled

in this Book of Life, that you may hear it then confessed before His "Father and the holy angels."

What an incentive to increased aspirations after holiness and higher spiritual attainments, to remember that the awards of that day and of eternity will be determined by the transactions of time! It is a grand Bible principle, that, though justified by faith, we shall be judged by works. Nay more, while from first to last, Jesus, and Jesus alone, is the meritorious cause of salvation, yet the works flowing from faith *in* Him, and love *to* Him will regulate the degree of future bliss,—whether we shall be among the "greatest" or "the least in the kingdom"—whether we shall occupy the outskirts of glory, or revolve in orbits around the throne in the blaze of God's immediate presence!

Reader! were that trumpet-blast now to break on thine ear, wouldst thou be prepared with the welcome response,

"Even so, come"? Seek to be living in this habitual state of holy preparedness, that even the midnight cry would not take thee by surprise; that the summons which will prove so startling to a slumbering world, would be to thee the herald of glory—"He cometh, He cometh to judge the earth!"

> "Never again your loins untie,
> Nor let your torches waste and die,
> Till, when the shadows thickest fall,
> Ye hear your Master's midnight call!"

Oh the blessedness of being able, in sweet confidence in the Saviour's second coming, to compose myself to rest night after night, and say, "Even though the trumpet of judgment should break upon my ears,

> "'I WILL BOTH LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE AND SLEEP
> FOR THOU, LORD, ONLY MAKEST ME DWELL
> IN SAFETY!'"

29TH NIGHT.

"I meditate on Thee in the Night Watches."

"He brought me to the Banqueting-house."—
Cant. ii. 4.

On Thy Banqueting-House.

"HE brought me!" —all of grace! *He* justifies, *He* glorifies. The top-stone is brought forth, the Banqueting-house is entered, with shoutings, saying, "Grace, grace unto it!" My soul! contemplate the journey ended, the course finished, the victory won! Seated at the supper-table of the Lamb in glory, guest talking to guest with bounding hearts, recounting their Lord's dealings on earth—the watch-word circulating from tongue to tongue, "He hath done all things well!" Angels and archangels, too, will be participants in that banquet of glory, and bright seraphs, who never knew what it was to have a heart of sin or to shed a tear of sorrow. But, for this reason, there will be one element of joy peculiar to the

redeemed, into which the other unfallen guests cannot enter—the "*joy of contrast.*" How will the present "great tribulation" augment the bliss of a world at once sinless and sorrowless! How will earth's woe-worn cheek, and sin-stricken spirit, and tear-dimmed eye, enhance the glories of that perfect state where there is not the type or symbol of sadness, not the solitary trace of one lingering tear-drop! Then will be realized that sweet paradox, "They rest," "They rest not!" "*The rest without a rest!*" "They *rest!*"—the eternal pause and cessation from all the feverish disquietudes of this world's sins and sorrows, all that would disturb the rapture of a holy repose, and yet the *restless* activity of holiness—the Divine energy of beings whose grand element of happiness is employment in the service and executing the will of God. In this "they cease not day nor night." It is sublimely said of the God before

whom they hymn their anthems and cast their crowns, "He inhabiteth the praises of eternity!"

"My soul! seek often to ponder, in the midst of thy days of sadness, the joys of that eternal Banqueting-house. "Ye shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more!" One moment at that table —one crumb of the heavenly manna—one draught from the river of life, and all the bitter experiences of the valley of tears will be obliterated and forgotten! Look upwards even now, and behold thy dear Lord preparing for thee this glorious "feast of fat things." "I go to prepare a place for you." "I will come again, and receive you unto myself!" He has Himself entered the Banqueting-house as the earnest and forerunner of the coming Guests. He, the first Sheaf of the mighty harvest, has been waved before God in the temple of the New Jerusalem, as a pledge of the immortal sheaves still to

be gathered into the heavenly garner. The invitation is issued, "Come, for all things are ready! the oxen and the fatlings are killed!"—My soul! prepare for the meeting; suitably attire thyself for such a glorious banquet. Put on thy beautiful garments—that righteousness of Jesus, without which thou canst not be *accepted*—that holiness of heart, without which thou canst not be an *acceptable* guest. Soon shall the little hour of life's unquiet dream be over; and then, oh the glorious surprise of being ushered in to that banqueting table—to know *for ever* the blessedness of those "who are called unto the marriage-supper of the Lamb!"

With the prospect of *such* joys awaiting me in the morning of immortality, with the dark night of death before me, and the grave my couch, I shall be able to say even of *its* lonely chamber—

"I WILL BOTH LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE AND SLEEP; FOR THOU, LORD, ONLY MAKEST ME DWELL IN SAFETY!"

30TH NIGHT.

"I meditate on Thee in the Night Watches."

"In thy presence there is fulness of joy."—Ps. xvi. 12.

On Thy Presence.

EVEN in this world, where there is *much* of God, how sweet to the Christian is the sense of His presence, and friendship, and love! What will it be in that world, where it is *all* of God? The foretaste is blessed—what must be the *fruition!* The rays of the Divine glory are gladdening—what must be the full blaze of that sun itself!

My soul! dost thou often delight to pause in thy journey?—does faith love to ascend its Pisgah-Mount and get a prospect of this Land of Promise? What is the grand feature and element which swallows up all the circumstantials in thy future bliss? Let Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles answer—It is "*Thy* Presence." "In my flesh, I shall see *God!*" says one. "I shall be satis-

fied, says another, "when I awake, with Thy likeness." "They shall see His face," says a third. Amid all the glowing visions of a coming Heaven vouchsafed to John in Patmos, there is One all-glorious object that has ever a peerless and distinctive pre-eminence—God himself. There is no candle—Why? "For the *Lord God* giveth them light!" There is no temple—Why? "For the Lord God and the Lamb are the temple thereof!" The Saints dwell in holy brotherhood; but what is the mighty bond of their union—their "chiefest joy"?—"He that sitteth on the Throne dwells among them!" They have no longer the intervention of ordinances and means—Why? Because "the Lamb that is in the midst of the Throne shall feed them, and lead them to living fountains of waters!" They no longer draw on the storehouse of the Promises—And why? Because "God himself shall wipe away all tears from

their eyes!" "No napkin," says a holy man, "but His own immediate hand, shall wipe my sinful face!"

My soul! here is the true "*Peniel*" —where you will "see God face to face!" Here is the true "*Mahanaim*" —where "the Angels of God meet you!" Here is the true Communion of Saints—"The glorious fellowship of the Prophets—the goodly fellowship of the Apostles—the noble army of Martyrs!" Yet all these latter will be subservient and subordinate to the first—the vision and fruition of *God!* Even the recognition of the death-divided (that sweet element in the Believer's prospect of bliss) will pale in comparison into a taper-light before this "Glory that excelleth!"

Reader! art thou among these "pure in heart," who are to "see God"? Remember the Bible's solemn interdict—"Without holiness no man shall see the Lord!" Remember its

solemn admonition—"And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as He is pure!" To "see God!" Oh! what preparation needed for so august a contemplation! Infinite unworthiness and nothingness to stand in the presence of Infinite Majesty, Purity, and Glory!

Can I wonder at the much discipline required ere I can be thus "presented *faultless* before the presence *of His glory*"? How will these needed furnace fires be dimmed into nothing when viewed from the Sapphire throne! "Heart and flesh may be fainting and failing;" but, remembering that that same God is now "the strength of my heart," who is to be my "portion for ever," I may joyfully say—

"I WILL BOTH LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE AND SLEEP;
FOR THOU, LORD, ONLY MAKEST ME DWELL
IN SAFETY!"

31st Night

"I meditate on Thee in the Night Watches."

"Now is the accepted time: behold! now is the day of salvation."—2 Cor. vi. 2.

On Thy Closing Call

READER! how stands it with thee? Is the question of thy eternity finally and for ever adjusted? Art thou at peace with God? Canst thou say with Paul, in the prospect of death, "I am now ready"? Hast thou been led to feel the infinite peril of postponement and procrastination, and responded to the appeal,—"Behold! *Now!*" Ah! how many have found, when the imagined hour of deathbed preparation had come, that the tear of penitence was too late to be shed, and the prayer of mercy too late to be uttered!

Let there be plain dealing between thy conscience and thy God. Seek not to escape from the pressing urgency of the question. Thou mayest dismiss it

now, but there is a day coming when thou durst not! Let it not merge in vague generalities—let it be realized as matter of personal concernment—of infinite moment to thyself—"Am I saved, or am I not saved?—am I prepared, or am I unprepared, to meet my God?" Thou mayest have, perhaps, an honest purpose of giving it some future entertainment at another and "more convenient season." Do we ever read of Felix's "*more*" convenient season? It were better not to risk to the experiment of a dying hour the solution of the problem—"Is it safe to delay?" Take it on trust, that it is a hard matter—a conference about the soul on the brink of eternity! Remember, "God's Spirit will not always strive!" All His other attributes are infinite, but His patience and forbearance have their "bounds and limits." The invitation which is thine to-day may be withdrawn to-morrow. The axe may be even now laid at the

root of the tree, and the sentence on the wing, "Cut it down!"

How awful, if it really be that thou art yet living in this state of estrangement and guilt! What a surrender of present peace! What a forfeiture of eternal joy!

Haste thee! flee for thy life, lest thou be consumed! Thy immortality is no trifle! "The night is far spent!" Who can tell *how* far? It may be now or never with thee! Thou art about once more to lie down on thy nightly pillow. What if thy awaking to-morrow were to be "in outer darkness"?

But, take courage—That night is *not too far* spent! Close this last of the "Night Watches," by fleeing, without delay, to Jesus—the Sinner's Saviour and the Sinner's Friend. It was on the *last* watch of the night He came of old to His tempest-tossed disciples. Like them, receive Him now into thy Soul! and have all thy guilty fears calmed by

His omnipotent "Peace, be still!" Are there not ominous signs all around as if the *world's* last and closing "night-watch" had set in? The billows are heaving high. We hear the footsteps on the waters! Amid the fitful moanings of the blast—the watchword is heard—of joy to some, of terror to others—"*Maran-atha!*" "The Lord is coming!"

Reader! art thou ready? Is the joyous response on thy tongue—"Come, Lord Jesus; Come quickly"? If this night were indeed *thy very last*, and the thunders of judgment were to break upon thee ere daybreak—wouldst thou be able, in the assurance of an eternal dawn, to say—

"I WILL BOTH LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE AND SLEEP;
FOR THOU, LORD, ONLY MAKEST ME DWELL
IN SAFETY"?

"Weeping

May endure for the

NIGHT,

But

Joy cometh in the

MORNING!"

Ps xxx. 5.


MORNING
&
NIGHT
WATCHES